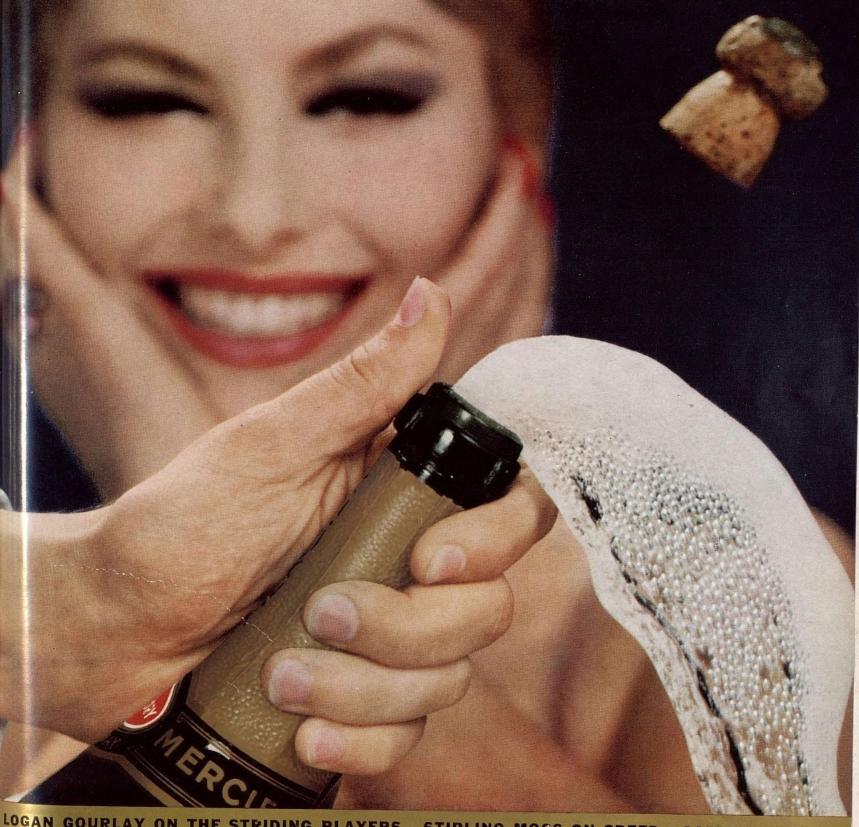


& BYSTANDER Christmas Number 1960 3s 6d



LOGAN GOURLAY ON THE STRIDING PLAYERS STIRLING MOSS ON SPEED CARYL BRAHMS
ON BALLET MONJA DANISCHEWSKY ON THE AMERICAN INVASION ENTERTAINMENT IN
BRITAIN SURVEYED, PROBED, PORTRAYED . . . WITH 18 PAGES OF FULL COLOUR



Tes the season of overtime
in the box-office. Everybody
thinks of Christmas as showtime, even those
who go no farther than the fireside telly.
So this year The Tatler's Christmas Number
makes a bright, brisk break
with tradition. The entire issue is
devoted to examining, reporting, celebrating
the business whose business is

ENTERTAINING BRITAIN!

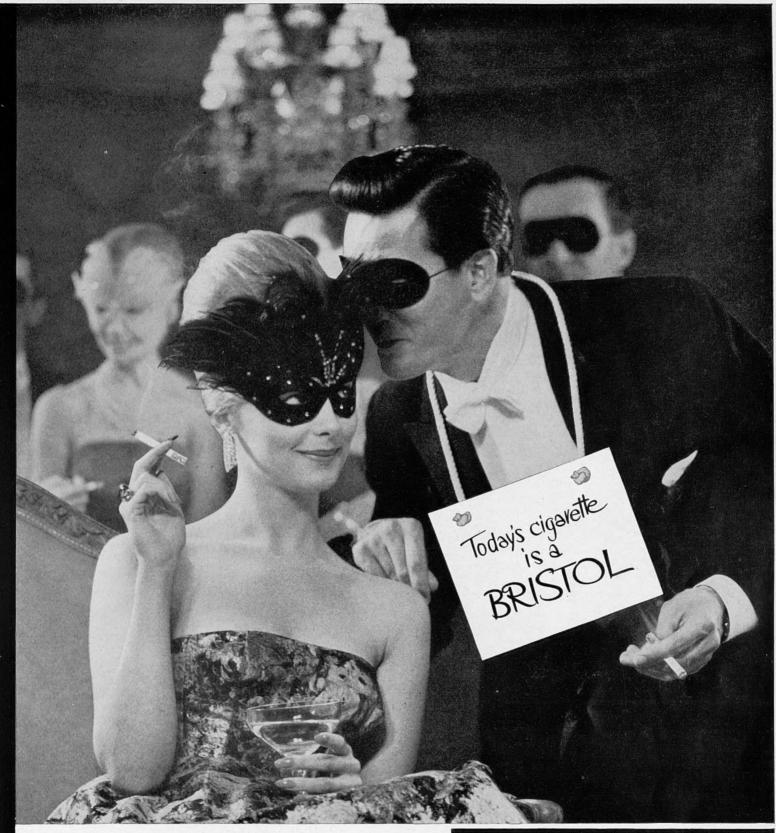
There's a full programme and a sparkling cast. Among the contributors: Logan Gourlay, famous columnist of the Daily Express, producer Monja Danischewsky, who writes with all the suavity and wit that he puts into his films (Whisky Galore, Battle of the Sexes), John Slater, TV's storytelling character actor, and Stirling Moss, who is just as articulate behind a typewriter as he is immaculate behind a steering wheel. Then there are familiar Tatler stars like Siriol Hugh-Jones, Caryl Brahms, Spike Hughes and Ronald Blythe, plus an array of outstanding photographers and illustrators. A full index is on page 13. Here's hoping you find it as entertaining as show business itself. And to go with it there are The Tatler's sincere greetings for a happy Christmas



This is an extra issue. The Tatler & Bystander, leading society journal in the United Kingdom, is published weekly at two shillings by Illustrated Newspapers Ltd. Registered as a newspaper for transmission in the United Kingdom. Subscription Rates: Great Britain and Eire: Twelve months (including Christmas number), £6 5s. 6d. Six months (including Christmas number) £3 5s.; (without Christmas number), £3 1s. Three months (no extras), £1 10s. 6d. Corresponding rates for Canada: £5 14s., £2 19s., £2 15s., £1 7s. 6d. U.S.A. (dollars): 18.50, 9.50, 9.0, 4.50. Elsewhere abroad: £6 12s., £3 8s., £3 4s., £1 12s.

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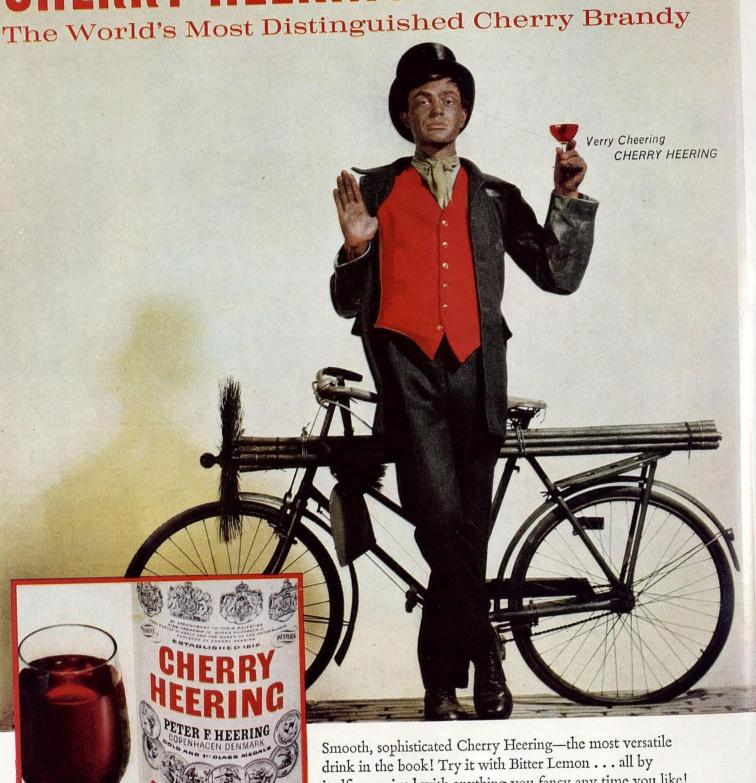




BY APPOINTMENT
TO M.M. KING GUSTAF VI ADOLF H.M. THE QUEEN OF THE RETHERLANDS
PURIEVOR OF CHERRY HEERING
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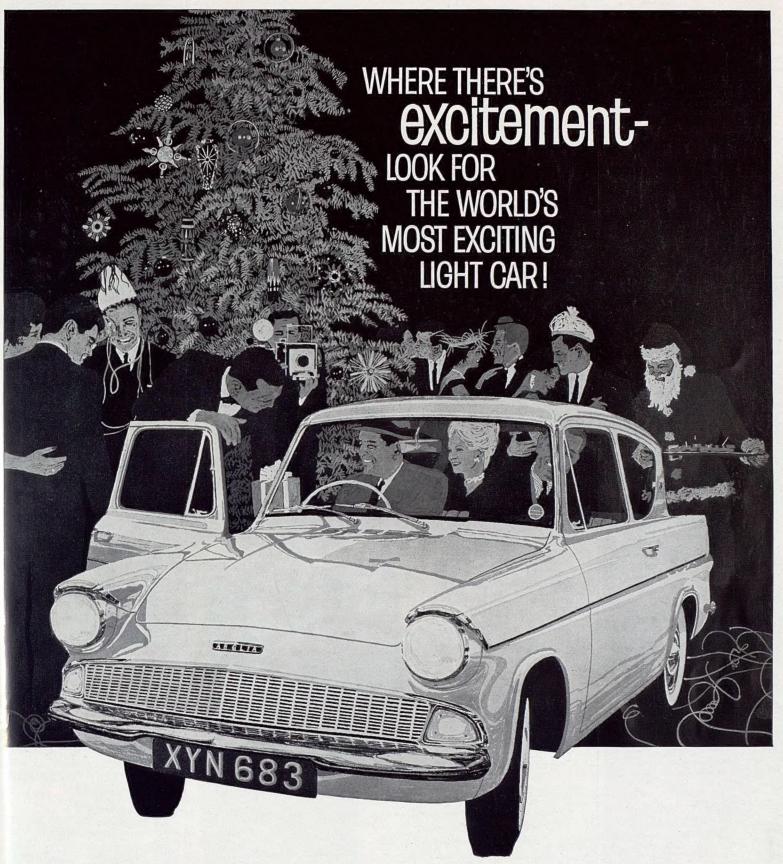
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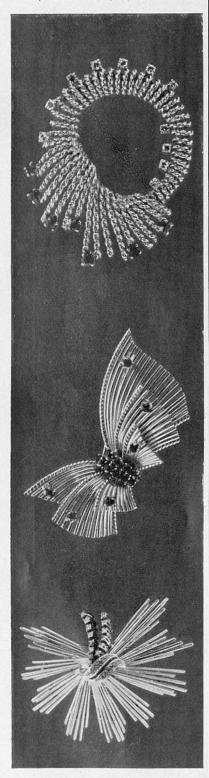
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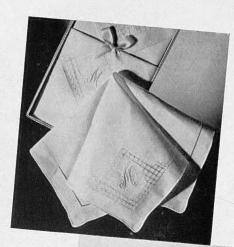


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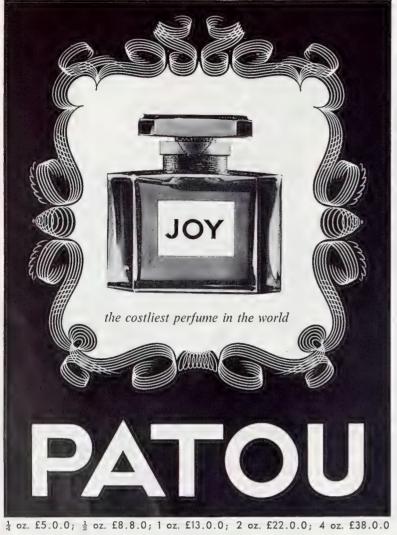
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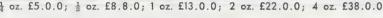
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greetings from STANDARD









ENTERTAINING BRITAIN!



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by Logan Gourlay with photographs by Alec Murray A portrait gallery of Britain's profusion of great actors and an examination of why this country produces so many

WHAT MAKES UNCLE SAMMY OVERRUN?

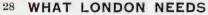
by Monja Danischewsky, with illustration by Brian Pyke The American impact on British entertainment—how big is it, how good is it, and how comes it?

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A Happy Christmas with

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DAN FOOD WAR ROYAL BABIES



THE TATLER and Bystander CHRISTMAS NUMBER



PLAYERS

Far removed from

the strollers of former times, today they usually get knighted—and their talent is so commanding that nobody demurs. How does Britain breed so many brilliant actors? The

STRIDING

SIR LAURENCE OLIVIER

At 53 not the senior of the stage's sextet of sirs but the most famous. Apart from his faithful, almost fanatical, service to Shakespeare in films and on stage, his remarkable versatility has enlivened the contemporary theatre, most recently in Ionesco's Rhinoceros. Now acknowledged by most as the world's greatest living actor; but seldom, if ever, by himself.

puzzle is probed by Daily Express columnist LOGAN GOURLAY. Photographs by ALEC MURRAY

VERY other week, regularly as the curtain rises, some-E body declaims that England has an actor's theatre, France a playwright's theatre, and America a director's. Like all generalizations this is only part truth. But for the moment I am concerned only with the part-the striding, ranting glorious part that is composed of such names as Olivier, Guinness, Richardson, Gielgud, Redgrave and Wolfit. No other country, with any claims to theatrical eminence, can produce such a company of illustrious and gifted actors, dedicated to their craft.

Cervantes wrote in Don Quixote: "Never meddle with actors, for they are a favoured class. Remember, that as they are merry folk who give pleasure, everyone favours and protects them." Cervantes, of course, did not foresee meddlesome newspaper men and critics but it is certainly a fact that England today favours and glorifies her actors to a level just below apotheosis, so that the accolade is the accepted-and expected-honour. Since the war first Richardson, then Olivier and the rest of the formidable soliloquizing sextet have been knighted.

Mercifully none of them displays his title on the playbills, but nowadays a British actor cannot be said to have reached full eminence until he can use it on his notepaper. In France the most that a respected and distinguished actor can

SIR DONALD WOLFIT

The last of the old actor-managers, the flamboyant curtain-embracers. Undaunted, he still storms the country with his actors and spearcarriers, bringing theatrical culture to a public increasingly more interested in TV. Has been called the best Lear and the greatest Volpone of his generation—and has never disagreed.





SIR JOHN GIELGUD

His latest appearance is in a new play by Enid Bagnold but he has devoted most of his career to Shakespeare and the classics. His voice is the perfect instrument for Shakespearean verse. With The Ages of Man, his recital of excerpts from the sonnets and plays, he colonized and conquered Broadway—single-handed and voiced.

THE STRIDING PLAYERS continued

SIR RALPH RICHARDSON

With his lifelong friend Olivier he revived the Old Vic financially and artistically during the war years. Before that, and since, he has played in every kind of play from modern comedy to Peer Gynt, with occasional forays into films. He has never triumphed in the big Shakespearean roles like Hamlet and Lear, and now at 57 has given up hoping.

SIR MICHAEL REDGRAVE

He wanted as a young man to be a poet, but turned to acting and was handicapped at the beginning, he says, "by an outdoor athletic appearance." Now has a reputation as a serious intellectual actor, but has ranged from tragedy to comedy in classics and modern drama. Has a pleasant singing voice and was offered the Rex Harrison part in My Fair Lady. He turned it down. Now he writes novels and essays—and reads other people's poetry.



hope for is a Legion d'Honneur (probably second class). In America he might be asked to coach the President for television. But in England it is the knighthood that beckons.

I'm not suggesting that this is the incentive which has helped to produce our unrivalled and unchallenged team of actors. This would be an absurdity of *regal* dimensions. The causes and reasons are elsewhere, though they are not easy to find and they are beyond, and below, the sextet of sirs.

I have heard it argued that Britain has hatched a preponderance of actors because the managements have been dominated by homosexuals. Those, it is said, have naturally (or unnaturally) encouraged, trained and developed more male recruits to the profession than women. I don't dispute the dominance but I leave the argument, empirical and I suspect mischievous, to be examined by any Wolfendens who may probe into Shaftesbury Avenue. Anyway the question is not: Have we more actors than actresses, good or bad? but Why have we so many good actors, knighted and unknighted?

All of them at one time or another, and in the case of Trevor Howard and John Mills for most of the time, have been lured away from the stage for the larger returns in



money and fame offered by the films. But a play producer in London still has a larger selection of trained, talented actors to draw from than anywhere else in the world.

Many of them come, as you know, from the rep theatres. These are now sadly dwindling in numbers, but there are still more of them in Britain than in any comparable country. And they are still providing an invaluable nursery and training ground for the young actor. We may lack a national theatre—and I'm afraid we will always have philistine governments who deny adequate financial subsidy for the theatre—but I hope (though faintly) that we will always have our reps, despite recurring financial crises.

It has been claimed that we can thank our drama schools like the Royal Academy and the Central School of Speech & Drama for the majority of our talented actors. But the claimants are usually teachers or directors of the schools. Most of the acting knights admit that they didn't start to learn their craft until they worked professionally.

Wolfit says: "I never went to any damned acting academy. I started on a Brighton pier and I learnt

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



my job battling round the theatres of this country."

It is interesting to note, incidentally, that none of our distinguished actors use The Method, which America borrowed from Stanislavsky to produce the mumbling naturalistic Brando and even the breathless pneumatic Monroe. Olivier and his colleagues regard The Method with either knightly indifference or disdain. Richardson says: "Every actor has his own method of understanding and tackling a part."

Yet it could be said that he and the others, whatever their variations in technique, use The English Method—a blend of the classic and the romantic that has developed over the years since Shakespeare himself spoke his own lines.

They are traditionalists. They are essentially English—the extrovert and histrionic that can be English as well as the reticent and the understated. The popular belief is that every Irishman and Italian is a born actor. It may be that, when an Englishman throws off his inhibitions and develops any innate talent he may have, he is the best of the lot.

Anyway there they are—the titled array, famed and envied throughout the world, and the trained battalions as yet untitled but often equally deserving. And all still hoping—for what actor in his mounting and childish conceit does not erave the lifetime role of knight?

Will England continue to retain its actors' ascendancy?

Will it go on producing more and more gifted leading men to dominate the stages and join the search for that rarity—a good play? I don't know. But personally I hope that the influence and dominance of the actors is not overexaggerated. They tend to produce a climate in which the playwright is encouraged to write a vehicle for the star, as John Osborne did with *The Entertainer* for Olivier. The result too often is an unbalanced, top-heavy, play.

Not that I wish to see actors reduced to the status they had in the days of Pope, who referred to them as:

"Peel'd, patch'd and piebald, linsey-woolsey brothers.

"Grave mummers: Shirtless some and sleeveless others."

But I do think that a theatre swollen and fevered by too many powerful actors is an unhealthy prospect, and the only antidote I can offer is that the profession should be relieved of this knighting habit. I tend to agree with the actor who said a few years ago: "The trouble with the actors nowadays is they forget they're descended from Bohemians, strolling players. They're all trying to be too damned respectable. Social-climbing and title-hunting have nothing to do with acting."

The speaker was the late and lamented Robert Newton. He always swore he would never have responded to the cue "Arise, Sir Actor."

But then he was never given the chance.



EMLYN WILLIAMS

At 55 he is as yet unaccoladed. If there is a reason it cannot be a reflection on his achievements—he wrote several famous plays like Night Must Fall and The Corn Is Green in which he also starred. Recently he has devoted most of his time—perhaps too much—to his one-man readings from Dickens. One of his last plays was Accolade—about an eminence of the ar.s, a knighthood, and a sex scandal.

PAUL SCOFIELD

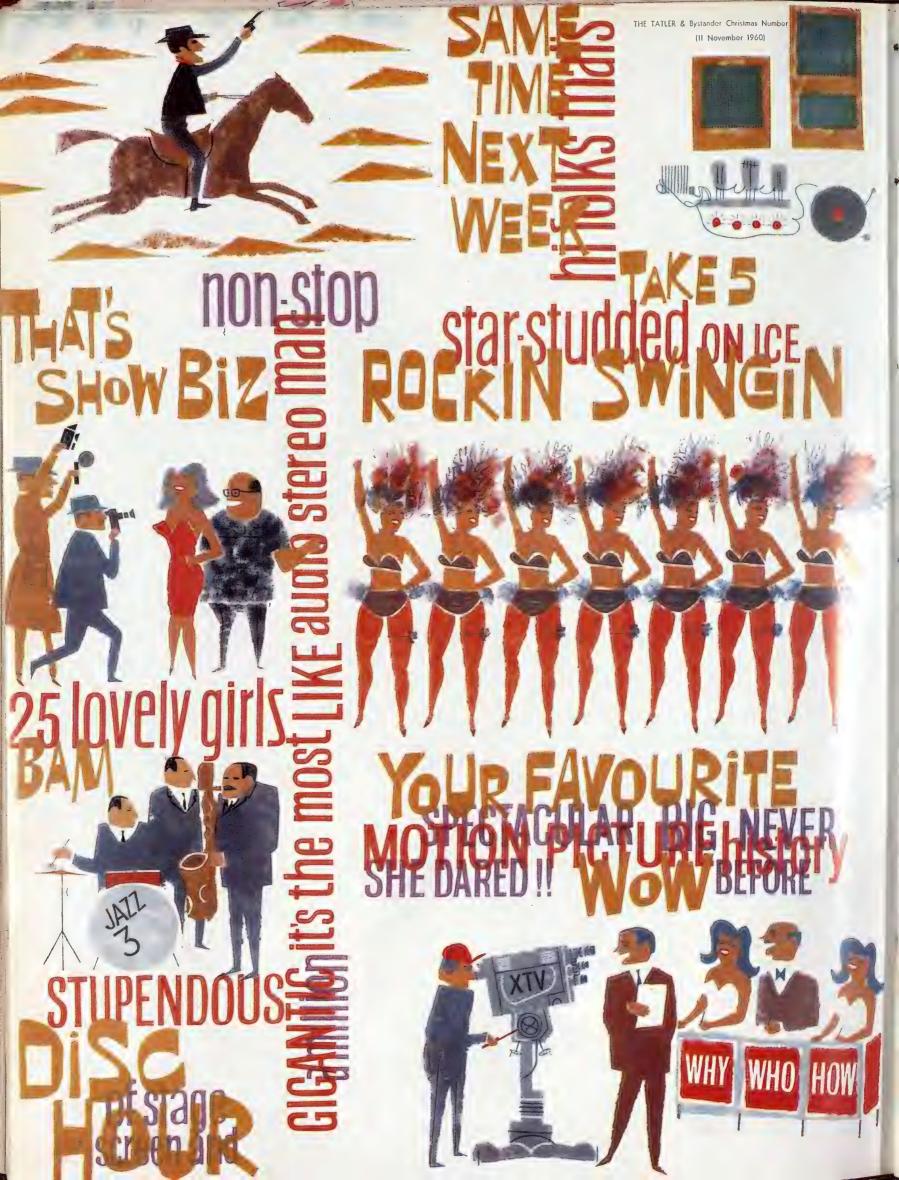
The youngest (38) of our distinguished establishment of actors. But since he graduated from Birmingham Rep. he has played major parts in a remarkable variety of modern and classical plays, from Hamlet to Expresso Bongo, and currently A Man For All Seasons. Films have claimed him only once—for That Lady. His next classical aim is Macbeth. He was given a C.B.E. two years ago—"to my surprise."



TREVOR HOWARD

First hit the top moneymaking bracket among British stars in 1947
and has stayed there through sheer good acting ever since. His
reputation is mainly for his films (which include a surprising
number of the best British ones like "The Way Ahead") but the
acting has roots in a RADA training and years on the stage





It may not have occurred
to the easygoing English
who grow up imagining
that Ford is an Essex
firm and Singer sewing
machines are a branch of
Rootes, but much of what
they take for granted
around them comes from
America. And nowhere is
the U.S. influence so
pervasive as in
entertainment. Here

MONJA DANISCHEWSKY

examines the invasion
and comes up with some
unexpected conclusions.
Overleaf The Big U.S.
Take-Over measures the
invasion in hard facts



A REAL live American hustler, they say, once managed to achieve an audience with the Pope. He was in the presence for so long that a cardinal, curious to know why the Pope would desire to protract this interview, yielded to temptation and listened at the door.

He heard the American say: "Suppose I make it three million dollars? . . . five million dollars? . . . six million dollars? . . . " and he heard the Pope reply gently but firmly: "You are wasting precious time, my son. Go with God!" When the R.L.A.H. came back into the antechamber, the cardinal could not resist asking him: "Why were you offering His Holiness these great sums of money?"

"Why?" repeated the disappointed hustler. "All I wanted him to do was to issue an edict to his people—that instead of saying *Amen*, they should say *Coca-Cola*."

The simple truth about the Americanization of British fun is that in America the paradox really exists that Great Fun is Big Business. In a land where the standard of desirability is the outsize (where but in California's Marineland would you find a performing whale) keeping the public amused and entertained is a grim and serious business. To the lucrative pursuit of this, tight-lipped tycoons dedicate their lives. In the lucrative pursuit of it they develop ulcers, neglect their wives and (as an ancillary big business) drum up trade for those friendly alienists, their psychiatrists.

King Size cigarettes. Emperor Size steaks. Jumbo Size postcards. Outside a supermarket I saw advertised for sale—Big Half Chicken. (Does it mean a big half, or half a big chicken?) The idea is always the same—to overwhelm and to diminish Man into a smaller and smaller particle, pursued and gobbled up by a larger and larger man-eating monster—Fun.

The pursuit remains the province of Big Business. Does the growth of commercial television threaten to topple the economic empire of the old-fashioned cinema films? Wall Street is alerted. Thousands of millions of dollars are in jeopardy. It is Wall Street which plans and sponsors the counter-attack. King Size screens, Emperor Size casts, Jumbo Size subjects. And what is the chink in television's armour? Purity. That's the weakness. Good clean killing is O.K.—so long as it is the Goodies who exterminate the Baddies—but no (we'd better spell it) S.E.X. Television shows must be lilywhite for the whole family, or what will happen to the breakfast-cereal advertisements?

So Wall Street nobbles the cinema censorship. Turn a blind eye, the ukase goes forth, blunt those scissors, throw away that blue pencil. The shareholders of the film corporations have got to live, too. Mr. Tennessee Williams forward, please! Boy, page Mr. Nabakov! Suddenly one long, hot



OM SHOW

WHAT MAKES UNCLE SAMMY OVERRUN? concluded

THE BIG U.S. TAKE-OVER

American shows in the West End during 1960

Once Upon A Mattress (Adelphi), The Most Happy Fella (Coliseum), Toys in the Attic (Piccadilly), My Fair Lady (Drury Lane), West Side Story (Her Majesty's), Flower Drum Song (Palace), World of Suzie Wong (Prince of Wales), The Princess (Strand), Horses in Midstream (Vaudeville)

American-controlled West End cinemas

Columbia (Columbia), Empire & Ritz (M.G.M.), Carlton & Rialto (20th Century-Fox), Plaza (Paramount), Warner (Warner Bros.)

American night-club invaders, 1960

Sammy Davis Jr., Eartha Kitt, Jean Carroll, Dan Dailey, Judy Garland, Lena Horne, Shirley Jones and Gordon Macrae

American-sponsored films in British studios

Greengage Summer (Columbia) starring Kenneth More and Susanna York; Five Golden Hours (Columbia) starring Ernie Kovacs, Cyd Charisse & George Sanders, produced and directed by Mario Zampi; Secret Partner (M.G.M.) starring Stewart Granger and Haya Harareet; Ray Stark's World of Suzie Wong starring William Holden, Nancy Kwan, Sylvia Syms & Michael Wilding, directed by Richard Quine (Paramount, premiére—December 14); The Naked Age (United Artists) starring Gary Cooper & Deborah Kerr; Cleopatra (20th Century-Fox) starring Elizabeth Taylor, Peter Finch & Stephen Boyd and produced by Walter Wanger; The Queen's Guards (20th Century-Fox) starring Raymond Massey, Daniel Massey

American shows on British TV

Riverboat, Bonanza, Father Knows Best, The Deputy, Sea Hunt, My Friend Flicka (Granada); Burns & Allen Show, Wells Fargo, Tenderfoot, Perry Como Show, Union Pacific, Lone Ranger (B.B.C.); Tightrope, I Love Lucy, Cimarron City, The Deputy, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, M-Squad, Annie Oakley, Fury (AR/TV); 77 Sunset Strip, Maverick, Highway Patrol (ATV)

and this doesn't count American songs on the Hit Parade, American best-selling records, jukeboxes, radio shows, ice spectacles, paperbacks—and even popcorn . . .

summer we have a street-car called Lolita on a hot tin $_{\rm TOOf.}$ Hollywood strikes back at television. On Emperor $_{\rm Size}$ screens—Jumbo Size sex (with sighs and yelps in stereophonic sound).

Another thing. Big Business demands expanding markets. Expanding markets demand a big export trade. A big export trade means, for us, the Americanization of British Fun. Quod Erat Demonstrandum. It is a question of an attitude of mind. Has it ever occurred to us to send our pantomimes across the Atlantic? Have our merchant bankers debated across their board tables the advisability of pouring millions of pounds into a great corporation to popularize cricket in the U.S.A.? Or darts? Or Devil-Among-The-Nine-Tailor or greyhound racing, or morris dancing? In our eyes Great Fun is one thing, Big Business is another. The difference the difference between the amateur and the profession status—between Gentlemen and Players.

There is no criticism implicit here of either country. Trivalry, if rivalry there is, exists between business inter—or, if you like, the refusal of British Big Business to Fun in terms of an important exportable common Certainly our own films are often welcomed in American paraised by their critics (sometimes over-generously) liked by such sections of the American public as frequen "Art" houses. Our playwrights, actors and stage directare often the darlings of Broadway. The theatre people have a professional appreciation of our theatre. In If wood I found a genuine respect and admiration for film-makers and their work.

In my own experience, the average American is inc to regard anything British as at a premium. I do

but still impregnably British is BRIGGS . . . and









MONJA DANISCHEWSKY

suppose that he either knows or cares that our cinemas are being turned into bowling alleys, that our TV screens crackle with American gunfire, that our traditional music-hall has largely given place to burlesque-type strip shows (can it be that the last bastion, the Crazy Gang, is really going to fall after their latest?) that our own rock 'n' rollers say tomaytoes and not tomahtoes, that our theatres have more American musicals than English. (We're only just getting to Dickens; they've already put Shaw behind them.)

This is not to say that the influence is everywhere. There is in the upper crust a hard core of resistance. True, the American films and stage shows, and the TV packages, have spread their influence evenly among all sections of our admass. But the converts to the Coney Island exports—andy floss, popcorn, bubblegum, the juke boxes, the slot nachines, the hamburger stalls, the Bar-B-Q's—these are ilmost entirely recruited from the ranks of the proles and he teenagers. How many of them are even conscious of the ource of inspiration? Or how many of them accept the new henomena as simply a part of the normal evolutionary rocess?

Life goes on—from the pipes of pan, the lyre, the lute, he bagpipe, the clavichord, the harp... and on and on to he musical heights of the washboard, the nightingale notes f Elvis Presley.

So far, the upper reaches of Debrett remain uncontaminated—but for how long? The signs and portents are minous. The one-armed bandits are now on the march—al the way from Las Vegas. For the benefit of the uninitated, one-armed bandits are the fruit machines from a nose whirring cornucopian insides gush forth the silver

jackpots. These, I am told, are now deemed to be legal and proper appurtenances of any respectable club. Just what is a respectable club? *Prenez garde* the Athenaeum, St. James's, Whites, Boodles . . . you have all been warned.

No, let us not feel gloomy or vanquished by the American dominance. Let us remember that the American nation is largely an amalgam of European settlers. What is Americanization? For all we know, the gentleman who popularized the yo-yo is but two generations removed from a Suffolk rectory. It may be that the man who launched the hulahoop on countless millions of undulating hips still treasures his grandfather's reminiscences of a Hebridean croft.

We cannot even be too sure that some of these imports are not our own chickens come home to roost. Sick jokes, for example. My mind goes back to the incomparable (and incomparably English) Gracie Fields. She sang—and I quote the words from memory:

- "Poor little Willie, he's deaf and he's dumb-
- "Poor little Willie's insane;
- "His eyes is all goggled and gloomy and glum,
- "What a shame! What a shame! What a shame!"

There you are: guaranteed made in England. What British fun! And how sick can you get?

It really isn't any use our mounting any nationalist high horse about the way we spend our leisure hours. In a world shrunk by science into a neighbourhood, it is no longer a question of rivalries between nations. It is a matter of keeping up not only with the Joneses, but with the Cohens and the Kellys, the Joe Doakses, and with Uncle Tom's Cabin an' all... and Uncle Tom's Cabin an' all...

entertainments he goes to at Christmas









THE ESONERIC.



DRESSING UP FOR DINNER seems ordinary enough, but the twist for members of the National Sporting Club is that right after the dinner comes the boxing. Dinner-jacketed and replete, the gentlemen move from table to ringside and there (further fortified by a brandy, say) they watch gladiatorial exertions amid the Edwardian splendour of the Café Royal. A spectator sport, sort of

DRESSING UP FOR OPERA is routine too, but the twist at Glyndebourne is that you probably picnic that way in the grounds (opposite). Indeed, this is an outing when you need to be ready for anything. You must expect to be stared at as you entrain in full finery and broad daylight at Victoria just before teatime, and the opera—even if not obscure—will invariably be sung (in full) in its original foreign language. Still, champagne on the lawns has a distinct flavour

FRINCE

What people find entertaining is an entertainment in itself. And the more surprising the cult, the more solemn its devotees' enthusiasm. Here are celebrated a few of 1960's improbabilities, each earnestly supported. Photographs by Roger Hill



THE ESOTERIC FRINCE



THE RHYTHM IS CRAZY, man, and just what the tune is that they're blowing right now is anybody's guess. In a jazz club like Cy Laurie's improvisation is the thing-you play as you feel and you dance as you feel. Never mind that you're in a cellar off Shaftesbury Avenue-you can imagine yourself in Dixie and it doesn't bother you a bit when a Cockney sings with a Negro accent

THE RHYTHM IS STRICT-TEMPO, ladies & gentlemen, and this is the Royston Hall at Penge, one of those places where people flock to do formation dancing for fun. Well, it's exercise and you meet people and it gets you. Ask anyone who's seen it on TV; it's no use pretending you don't care whether Stockport knocks up more points than Streatham, because before long you do, you do

Charles Forte:

We do lack bands, playing in parks. London has several pleasant parks where bands could be heard, during lunch hours, evenings and weekends—on Saturdays if not Sundays. Something could be done with Leicester Square, for instance. . . . There is a lack of festive spirit in London itself. I would like to see more colour. We could have music in the buses and the tube trains. . . . In theatres, sometimes the bar facilities could be better. And our licensing hours are completely antiquated. We should be allowed to behave like grown up people?



WHAT LONDON

Mrs. Aidan Crawley (VIRGINIA COWLES):

This is the only capital city in the world where everything shuts up at half past eleven. Lyons Corner House used to stay open all night, but now there's only a place in Fleet Street—a sort of pub—and that's always absolutely crowded. We asked Lyons why they shut down and they said it's because it's impossible to get staff. There must be somewhere to go and eat at night. My secret thought is that the English don't really want tourists to come. It could be because the English don't run family businesses. . . . English people do like their leisure?

Montagu Moss ('MR. Monty' of the Bros):

There is nowhere in London where one can get a pleasant light meal, in pleasant surroundings, in a pleasant atmosphere, without spending a fortune. Eating out in London is so terribly expensive. And there are so few restaurants with good views. There's the Royal Festival Hall, but that is rather large and slightly impersonal.... Theatres should have a dress performance one evening a week, with higher prices and later times. People will appreciate paying more for a performance when everyone else is dressed up as well. The higher prices would pay for the extra staff and possibly reduce prices at other performances?





Venetia Quarry:

London lacks cafés and night clubs for young people, places where one can go and enjoy oneself without having to spend a terrific amount of money. London, if anything, is a little too formal, and there isn't enough to do at weekends. Theatres? We have nothing to compare with the French theatre. . . . There are a couple of good new night clubs, but they are so popular that there's hardly room to breathe. . . . I can't understand people who say that they have nothing to do. I mean, one has so many friends to see?



Christina Foyle:

We are still dreadfully short of restaurants—especially for young people. My husband and I have all our meals out, and we often spend quite a lot, but it still makes little difference. The facilities in Portugal and Denmark are immensely better. I have an especially favourite restaurant in Portugal. . . . As for theatres, I think the Cambridge and the new Columbia theatres are very good-you can make yourself comfortable in them-but most of the others could do with improvement?



George Weidenfeld:

Though private entertainment is good there is a shortage, I find, of casual, improvised entertainment. There is no café life, such as you find in Rome and Venice-even in the back streets of New Yorknowhere to sit and read, or just to stare into space. (I do like sedentary entertainment. . . .) And people always tend to go to the same places. Apart from the few good restaurants, standards are really Yes, entertainment London is all so arranged?



NEEDS Ten answers by ten about-towners

PHOTOGRAPHS: SANDRA LOUSADA

Earl of Kimberley:

A terrific amount of tax is collected in France from gambling, which should be allowed in England. (The new American embassy in Grosvenor Square could very well be a casino!) I would like to see a racecourse in Hyee Park-it would give people som thing to do at weekends. Pro ide some decent entertainment. And you could build a decent circular road round the Park and have mot r racing there when the horse racing isn't on. It'd help the traffic for the rest of the week. . . . Then we lave such ridiculous licensing hour. If you want a drink at three in the afternoon why the **** can't you have one??



Valerie, Lady Bowden:

In theatres, they never seem to have enough barmaids around. And, of course, if they made the theatres a bit gayer, with better curtains. Everybody should dress for the theatre, and why can't we go back to 8.0 or 8.30? . . . The red paving of the Mall is very effective and presumably efficient from an upkeep point of view. Could not more use be made of simple, subdued colours -red, blue, green-in both roads and pavements? . . . And newspaper kiosks, on the Continent they are so gay . . . I'd love to have open taxis again, especially in the fine weather?



La ly Pamela Berry

What London lacks and what Paris doesn't is plenty of outdoor restaurants with wine. It's depressing to come back to these dull off-licences and restaurants where they serve you tea with it slushing around in the saucer. Parks should have one good restaurant in each.... The Thames should be made more use of-there should be open-air restaurants all along the river. . . . As for private entertainment it has largely ceased to exist, partly due to domestic difficulty. Personalities of the calibre of Lady Cunard are needed 2



Feliks Topolski:

Almost every other major city has a festival, when the arts and things connected to them are pushed forward, instead of being dominated by commercialism. London should have a festival, too. The Festival of Britain gave a terrific injection of energy; artists did many things they would never ordinarily do. The Edinburgh Festival is a good thing, for instance. . . . Expense accounts are spoiling the night clubsincreasing the prices, and filling them with a lot of dull, elderly people. I'd much prefer more jazz clubs 🤊





An eight-page section

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DESMOND O'N LL

there's nothing more
entertaining than

WITH A PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY OF GOING FAST BY STIRLING MOSS



MANPOWER, with nothing but spikes to aid it, is faster than it seems. Jesse Owens once beat a racehorse over 100 yards. Certainly the Olympics showed that the speed events are the most exciting in athletics. This was a heat in the 100-yard hurdles at the British Games last summer



Horsepower, the mechanical kind, increases so fast that it keeps getting reined in by changes of formula. Gaining adherents is the manageable new Formula Junior, ideal for the winding Crystal Palace circuit. Darting round it here is an Elva-DKW driven by C. Johnson



STIRLING MOSS writes:

I like my job. I suppose that makes me lucky, for there must be man people to whom their work is a bore at best, sheer drudgery at wor. People who look on their job simply as a means of earning their bread and butter. But no professional racing driver could go on for long in that frame of mind. To all of us, our profession must be the most thrilling and exhilarating business in the world. It certainly is as far as I am concerned.

But it is a job that raises eyebrows and causes questions to be asked, the most frequent of which is "Why do you race?" And since my crash in Belgium last June, the inquirers have become even more mystified. The question has turned into: "Why on earth do you go on racing?" The voices are tinged with incredulity as though I were—well, at least eccentric. But I can understand why. After all, there are easier ways of earning a living than tearing around a mile or two of road every weekend, trying to go faster than everyone else. "Flirting with death" is a cliché, but that is how I know many people dismiss motor-racing, considering it to be an occupation fit only for idiots. "What can they get out of it?" they ask.

Speaking for myself, the answer to all these questions is the same.



c**o**ntinued

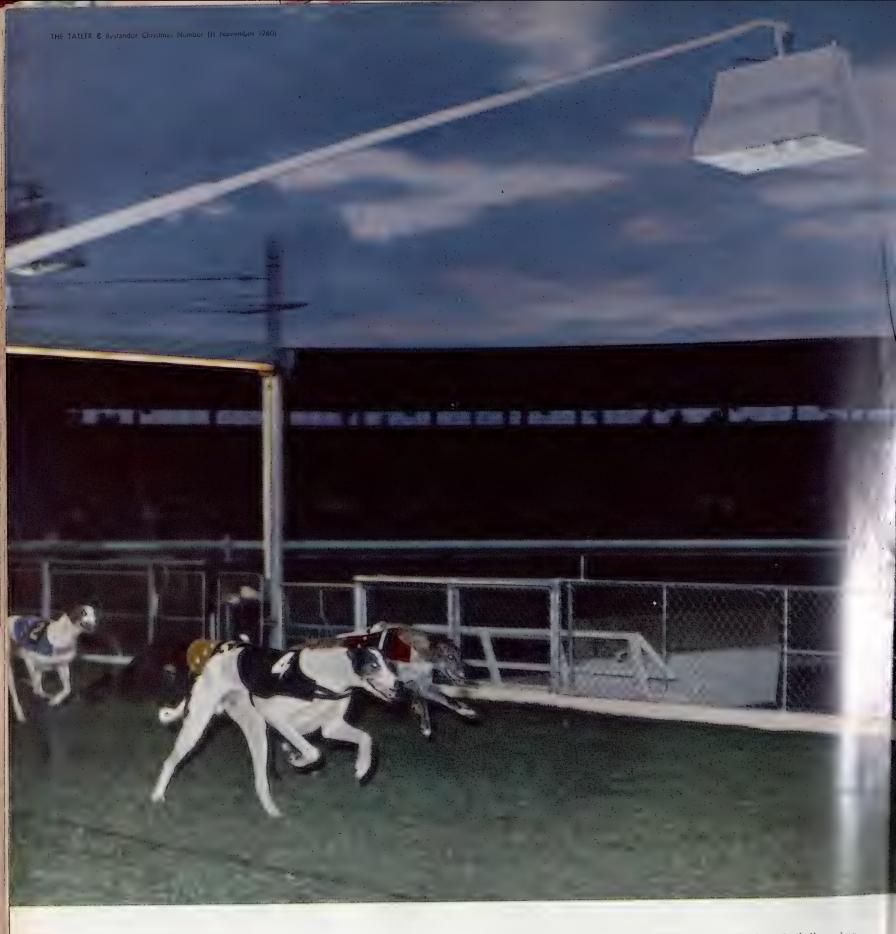


Motor-racing gives me exactly what I want out of life—excitement, travel, the opportunity of meeting interesting people, and the natural satisfaction of proving myself better at my job than the next man. There is no denying that it is a dangerous game. But danger is something that the successful and wise racing driver neither ignores, nor particularly enjoys. He acknowledges it and learns to accept it, but must not allow himself to be frightened by it. Not, at any rate, to the extent of its affecting his driving in any way, or of slowing him down.

On the other hand, a driver completely without the reaction of fear is a menace to both himself and his colleagues. For fear is the natural afety valve between driving to one's limit and exceeding that limit. A driver who frightens himself is going too fast for everyone's safety, not only his own. There are, thank goodness, few literally fearless drivers. But those that there have been have often, unfortunately, paid a dear price for their misplaced courage.

While I have frequently "given myself a turn" on the circuit, I have been *really* frightened only twice during my whole career. The first time was many years ago, in my early days; the second, when the steering of my Mascrati broke at 160 m.p.h. on the banking at Monza.

IT'S ALL OVER in 2 minutes 35.8 seconds! Thousands of pounds have changed hands, thousands of hopes have been dashed or rewarded, and the 1960 Derby field has covered a flat-out mile-and-a-half. Here St. Paddy has flashed past after winning, and the tired followers pull up in a cloud of dust. Included are (from right), Kythnos (3rd), Alcaeus (2nd), Chrysler III (10th, blue cap), Auroy (4th), Proud Chieftain (5th), and Oak Ridge (7th, blue and white). With all the colour that surrounds it the Derby is one of the supreme speed events of the world



when the lights come on the stadium pace changes from football or showjumping on the pitch to racing around the track. Sleck, silent greyhounds in gay jackets chasing that elusive hare, or noisy, cumbersome saloons seeking to improve on their scrap price with prize money. You can go to the dogs six nights of the week all the year round in London—nowhere else in the world does the sport have such a following. Stock-car racing is less well entrenched, but the thrills of 20 crash-bang laps (and perhaps an odd wheel flying off into the grandstand) can pack Harringay, where this picture was taken. The dogs were racing at the White City (where you can dine as you waich as you bet) in the Derby Trial Stakes





The car slewed this way and that, completely out of control, before finishing up in a cloud of dust at the bottom of the banking. I thought that I must indeed be dead, and in either heaven or hell. I just couldn't have got away with *that*. But if I was in hell, why was the car still with me—and if I was in heaven, why was it so dusty?

Speed in the right place (and that place is not on the so-called "open" roads of Britain) is exhilarating. I would never deny that. But in a motor race, it is only the means to an end, the end being the winning of the race. I often think the spectators in the grandstands probably get more of a kick out of seeing a car go very quickly, than the driver gets out of pushing it along at that speed. And even then, the comparative speed, which need not necessarily be high, between two cars engaged in a duel is frequently more exciting than the sight of a single

car going twice as fast along the straight. Frankly, record-breaking—where sheer, out-and-out speed is the only thing that matters—always makes me nervous.

What really does appeal to me about motor-racing is the fascination and excitement you get from pitting your skill and ability against that of the other drivers. That and the far more abstract, and in many ways far more satisfying, thrill of being able to put one over on the natural forces of gravity and, consequently, adhesion. It is gravity which is the racing driver's real adversary from the moment the flag falls at the beginning of a race. On every corner of every lap, it wants him either to drive too slowly and stay firmly on the track, but with no hope of winning, or hurl him off the track and into the ditch if he overdoes it. In order to win, the driver must face this unsympathetic enemy, using





his skill with the steering wheel and the brake and throttle pedals to tread delicately the knife edge between triumph and disaster.

Speed in itself I find unsatisfying. But rounding a difficult corner safely and faster than anyone else, as fast as I myself am able, and right on the farthest limit of adhesion, gives me a sense of satisfaction that cannot be duplicated in any other way.

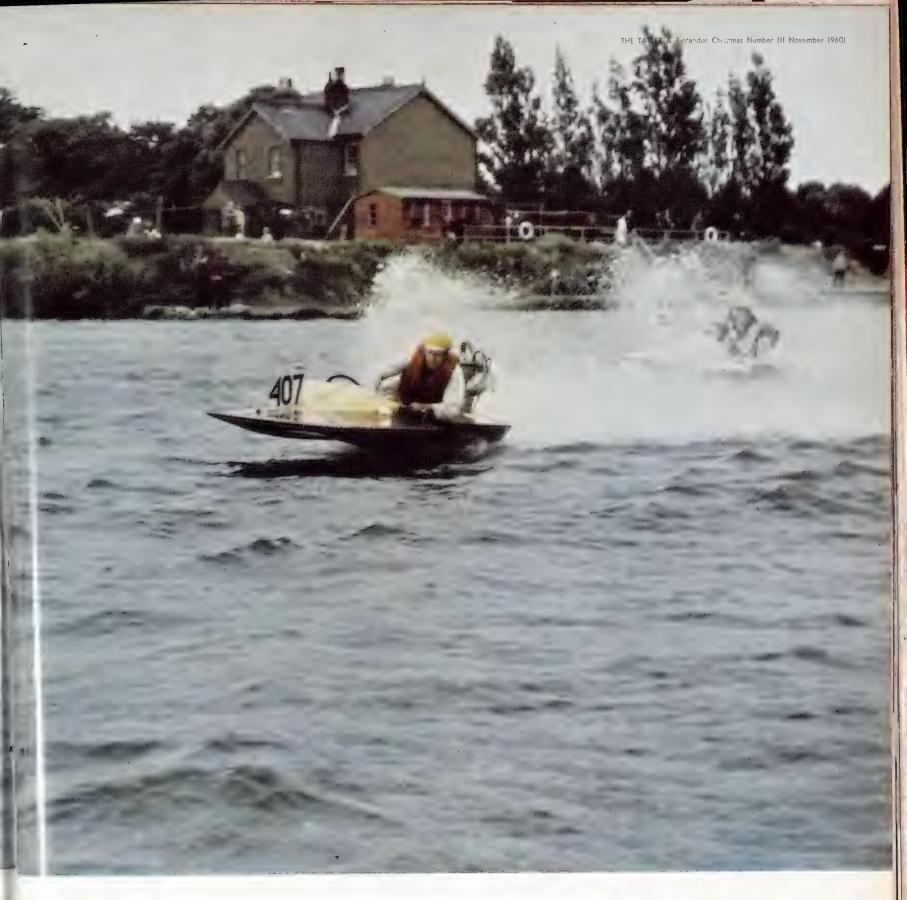
When you take part nearly every weekend in a sport as exhilarating as motor-racing, it is difficult to relax by doing nothing. At least, I find



it to be so. I am not a particularly good spectator of other people's sports; I prefer to participate. It may be a contradiction of terms, but I can relax only by doing something, and here again I get the most satisfying kick out of sports where my main adversary is nature rather than man—where skill and precision count for as much, or more, than brute force and strength.

Skin-diving is one, water-skiing is another, and both are pastimes in which you have to get the better of natural forces in order to be proficient. It is, perhaps, a failing of mine that I am a perfectionist. If I do a thing, I like to do it well, or forget about it and go on to something else. I find the element of challenge I seek in hobbies as diverse as dancing and designing.

And I can say quite truthfully that I get just about as much satisfaction from having a go at the cha-cha as I do from executing a tricky manoeuvre in water-skiing.





WATER'S THE SAFEST for speed—coming a cropper doesn't hurt and you can always float even if the boat sinks. Hence the flourishing forms of getting a move on affoat. Sailing was never so popular (the International Dragon Primula is seen in the Edinburgh Cup). Outboard racing, thriving in the States, now has a foothold here, and summer Saturdays see enthusiasts roaring round patches of water like Bedfont lake in Middlesex. Water-skiing has more and more British exponents like Miss Patricia Rawlings—though they get most of their practice abroad



FOR A QUICK TASTE of the magic sensation, just drop in at any fairground like this one at Hampton Court. You can get it all on a 60-second whirl



1



The dance of the Lilac Fairy from this year's production of The Sleeping Beauty at Covent Garden.
 The Prologue continues with a male pas de six.
 The Lilac Fairy repels the wicked fairy Carabosse (Ray Powell) and annuls her curse on the new-born princess: "She shall not die but sleep." 4. The Court joins in a thanksgiving dance for the removal of the





THE BALLET BUBBLE

curse. 5. The Garland Dancers try to sn
glimpse of the forbidden needles carried t
Knitting Women. 6. The Knitting Women p
Catalabutte (Leslie Edwards) for their lives.
first act ends as the King (Derek Rencher) git
to the pleading of the Queen and spares the ives
of the knitting women. "Very well, let them live"

IS IT BURSTING?

by Caryl Brahms

COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS: JOHN COWAN





As BALLET on the way out? That is what I am always being asked these days. The easy answer is Yes and No. Yes, it is no longer the fashionable seasonal offering it used to be in the early 30s and later 40s; and No, it can still draw a full house (but unless it is a Fonteyn night or a company from abroad—the American, French or Bolshoi ballets—they do not have to put the boards out and it is not a bib-and-tucker audience). Yet, given the right dancer in the right ballet, the ballet-goer still supports the ballet.

Consider the form:

The Englishwoman with parents in the higher income bracket is brought up to be ballet-minded from the outset. At the age of three her small-scale rotundities are inserted into a tu-tu and off she staggers to her parties wreathed rather crookedly in rose-buds. Sometimes there is a touching gap in her toothy smile. Already she has the ballerina temperament.

From the frivolities of three to the serious matter of the Saturday Dancing Class at a mature five, there to bump merrily about or stand quite still—well, moderately still—her chubby feet wriggled into the third position, or pointing unsteadily from the fourth; her arms a halo and her fingers quirked. This is one of Nature's own progressions. At eight she is a dedicated ballerina with pin-ups of Fonteyn and Somes on the wall she sees when first she wakes up in the morning.

What chance has poor Dr. Tyrone Guthrie—his is the voice crying in the wilderness that ballet should be confined to its functional use in opera and not presented as an art-form of its own—in the face of so much Swan potential?

But eight-year-olds grow up. Old passions give place to new obsessions. Dedication slips. Ponies set in. At 18 the dedicated ballerina has become a model-girl dancing across our hoardings in a zany pas-seul. And where does she spend her evenings? At the ballet. No wonder we, the English, breed the most ballet-minded public in the world this side of Leningrad.

Of course each star dancer—be it Fonteyn, Gilpin, even little Aldous, the new star of the Ballet Rambert—has a public of devoted fans. And each of the great classical ballets such as Giselle, Lac des Cygnes, The Sleeping Beauty, will augur "House Full" boards when Svetlana Beriosova, the dancing beauty of the ballet, or accomplished Nadia Nerina, or—alas! that it should be so rarely—the incomparable Alicia Markova is appearing. Ashton's brilliant recreation of La Fille Mal Gardée for the Royal Ballet packs in fashion as well as Chelsea fringe and honest office fan. And Balanchine's Bourée

Fantasque will certainly create a vogue for Festival Ballet. The Christmas ballets—Cinderella and Casse-Noisette—have a readymade public of uninhibited little girls and faintly embarrassed, rather bigger boys.

There is also a cross-section of the public that insists on going to the theatre of its choice irrespective of what ballet is being given and who is dancing in it. The Royal Opera House has a public of its own, composed of people out to see and be seen because it's fun to dress up; or because of the fascination and grandeur of this great plush house where the pretty girl in the box or the elegant lady in the stalls may well turn out to be one of our royal princesses or duchesses on a private visit. And of course there are those State Visits, when the Garden goes en gala and the horseshoe tiers are swagged in pink carnations. A bower is built for the Queen and her guests in the centre of the grand tier; the entire Corps Diplomatique turn out like uncles and aunts to a wedding, and from stalls to gallery everyone wears the lot.

The Festival Hall, too, has an audience of its own. It may be a little apt to arrive in sports cars or by convenient Undergrounds and bus routes; audiences are attracted by the feeling of light throughout the building-as though the foyers had ballooned up from a glass blower's pipe and been set down on steel stalks. From the windows and the roof gardens one can take in the iridescence of the Thames at night that stretches from the floodlit plum-pudding dome of St. Paul's to the pale grey feather of smoke blown by the Battersea power station, with a million million light-points in between. The stage here is really too shallow for ballet, the lighting apt to be elementary. And only the management turns up in dinner jackets. Not many escorts would be allowed into the stalls at the Rome Opera, the Scala or the Summer Casino at Monte Carlo were they to present themselves as we see them on the South Bankor, for that matter, on off-nights at the Garden.

The big American musicals draw part of the ballet audience, too. The balletgoers see lively, leaping girls and boys whirling over the stage American-wise, making bright patterns out of movement and high spirits. This kind of ballet is exhilarating at its best—in West Side Story for instance. It could be likened to a kind of jive at university level and it has moments of breathtaking beauty. An even bigger draw, of course, is the unadulterated American ballet and when Jerome Robbins brings over a troupe of friendly, loose-limbed American youngsters there is almost as frenzied a turnout as when the Bolshoi appears either in toto (not to be confused

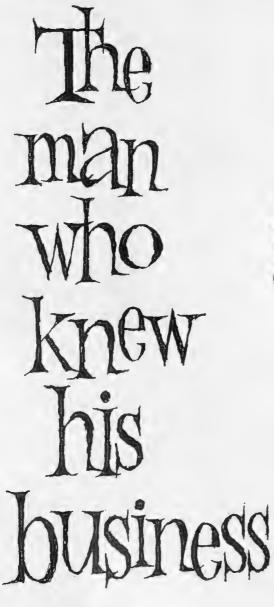


Nadia Nerina dancing with the corps de ballet in The Sleeping Beauty at Covent Garden

with in tu-tu, for incidentally I have never seen the Russians in the curtailed wisps of beaten white of egg which our own ballerinas and those of France favour) or in pairs in concert ballet.

It may be that ballet has a following among those who never go out to see it on the stage, for they televise ballet really rather well these days. But one has only to see it "live" to realize that the screen is apt to cramp the spectacle and drain it of colour, and the switch-on knob robs it of that sense of occasion that only the living theatre can give it. Not even the cinema, with all its colour and its wide screen, its camera techniques and the clear view it can offer from every seat, constitutes a real threat to the chandeliers and glories of the opera houses of the world.

It may be that the ballet has lost some of its chic to the opera-that no Callas of the dance may yet be discerned in the serried ranks of Giselles now waiting in the wings. It may be that, search those classrooms as we may, we cannot predict with any confidence that the third arabesque on the straining, wriggling, sweating left is going to belong to the next Ulanova. My hunch is that, with the wonderful technicians they are producing among the male Russian dancers, to create new standards of achievement, we may be about to revert to Diaghilev. It could be that a new Nijinsky is about to rise, shine and dazzle us in London, Paris, New York or Leningrad. He could be the great star of the next generation who would restore the balance of drawing power.





HRISTMAS is a nostalgic time, isn't it? You always start thinking of other Christmases. Like the time a few years ago when I was working on the last picture scheduled to be made at one of the biggest film studios in England. Chippy I was, working under Charlie Plaistowe, one of the best carpenters in the business. And I'll never forget the look on his face that Friday when he came into the shop after the weekly meeting up at the Production Office and said: "This is it, boys—Flaming Lady finishes shooting next Wednesday, carpenters' shop staff collect their chips and their cards next Friday."

"Flash! Chippies get chips!" shouted one of the bright boys. "Ouch!" he added a moment later when I dropped a 14-inch plane on his foot.

I knew what it meant to Charlie see—15 odd years he'd been knocking around in the business and four years ago he'd married Jeannie out of the Script Department. And now there was Gillian as well, a lovely little kid, just over her third birthday. And there we all were with Christmas coming up in a couple of months or so and not much else in view, and the business collapsing all round us like a set of leaky bagpipes.

When Charlie told Jeannie about it she wasn't too worried. After all there's always plenty of work for a skilled craftsman these days. But she'd reckoned without Charlie's attitude to his job. Working in the film business, he'd always felt part of something creative. Y'know there's a special sort of feeling that people working in the entertainment line get—chippies, sparks, stars, chorus girls—all of 'em, and they're just plain useless at anything else until they get it out of their system. And that isn't easy when your system's been running that way as long as Charlie's had.

The first couple of weeks when he came back from the Labour Exchange, Jeannie didn't say anything when he told her there was nothing doing. In a way it was fun, sort of being on holiday when everyone else is hard at it. But the third week she told him straight that Christmas was coming and the purse was getting thin. He tried to explain the way he felt but all Jeannie said was she thought houses were just as creative as film sets (and a sight more practical) to say nothing of ships and shops and factories.

Then the next week when he was going off to the Labour Exchange, after breakfast, they started the same argument again and she let her hair down properly. "You and your creative work," she said. "Who do you think you are, Salvador Dali?"

"He's only a painter," shouted Charlie, "not a carpenter." $\,$

"He earns a good living," she retorted fiercely. "I bet his kids'll have Christmas pudding and turkey. Anyway Gillian wants a tricycle."

Charlie could see the argument was getting a bit silly so he tried a more reasonable line. "Look, love," he said mildly. "Suppose I take any old job they serve up to me and then the studio puts through a call and there I am shovelling snow off doorsteps and stuck with it for a week and miss the job?"

"Studio put through a call," she jeered. "The only call you'll get from them will be a black-edged invitation to the funeral of the British film industry. I warn you, Charlie Plaistowe, either you change your ideas or I leave you and go out to work myself,"

"Don't talk silly," he told her. "What would happen to Cillian?"

"I'll put her in Mr. Reed's home," Jeannie said. "At least she'll get a decent Christmas there."

"That's enough of that," Charlie blustered. "I don't want to hear any more nonsense. I'll take a job when they o fer me one that suits me and not before... understand?" And with that he belted out of their two rooms, kitchen a d bath.

By the time he got to the Labour Exchange he'd simmered down of course, and when the little man behind the galle said, "Ah! Mr. Plaistowe, I think we've got something ir your line," well his heart got in the way of his tonsils at d he could hardly ask what it was.

'You're in the entertainment line, aren't you?" the man went on.

'Yes," Charlie said hopefully. "Have the studios reopened?"

'Studios?" said the Labour man. "Oh . . . no."

Somebody want a stage carpenter for a panto, then?" No...no," said the dole-bloke. "It's at Everington's. You know, the big store in the High Street. They want so meone to be Santa Claus in their toy department."

Santa Claus!" Charlie exploded. "What's that got to do with the entertainment business?"

Well, you know-dressing up and whiskers and all thet."

What do you take me for," said Charlie, dead indignant. "I'm a carpenter, I'm used to working in studios."

"Oh—I didn't mean to . . . I only thought," the fellow stuttered.

Charlie thought a moment. "All right," he said. "I'll take it." He took the card the little man was holding. "Now perhaps she'll be satisfied," he murmured.

"Oh!" said the little man, "yes—well—I most certainly hope—" Charlie left him twittering behind his wire like a budgerigar that's just been stroked by a tom-cat. Then he went to Everington's, tried on the red coat and the whiskers and clinched the job with the manager to start at 8 o'clock next morning. After that he went home. There was a sort of hollow sound to the front door when he slammed it and when he got into their own flat he could only hear him-

self and he knew before he opened a door that the rooms were empty. He began to feel scared when he saw that Jeannie's dressing gown had gone from the peg behind the bedroom door. He rushed into Gillian's room and the drawers of the little chest he'd made for her were hanging open—and empty like a box full of yawns. Mr. Reed's, he thought, she said she'd take her to Mr. Reed's and he tore out of the flat again.

Mr. Reed was a big serious man with a twinkle. He ran the local children's home and that seemed to cover all sorts. He looked after children whose parents were dead, children whose parents weren't fit to keep them, children whose parents couldn't keep them—all sorts. Charlie and Jeannie had met him at whist drives and jumble sales and local charity do's. He seemed to be expecting Charlie. "Hullo, Mr. Plaistowe," he said.

"Is Gillian here?" said Charlie.

"Yes," said Mr. Reed.

"I want her," said Charlie.

"Of course, I'll send for her, is her mother with you?"

"No. I don't know where she is."

Mr. Reed took his finger away from the bell without pushing it. "You mean at this moment?" he said slowly.

"This moment or any other moment," Charlie replied.

"You mean she's not at home to look after Gillian?" said Mr. Reed.

"I'm capable of looking after her, aren't I?" Charlie demanded.

"Are you working, Mr. Plaistowe?"

"If you think I can't support her, you're wrong," Charlie said hotly. "I'm starting a new job tomorrow, and you can tell that to my wife the next time she comes."

"Do you propose taking Gillian to work with you, then?" Mr. Reed asked.

"Of course not," said Charlie.

"Then you intend she shall be left alone in your rooms all day?"

"Well, I. . . ."

"No, Mr. Plaistowe," said Reed. "Surely in your heart you agree that for the time being Gillian is best off here—at least until we hear from your wife."

Well, Charlie knew he was talking sense and didn't say any more.

Jeannie didn't come home that night, and when Charlie got all dolled up in Everington's Toy Department next morning you'd have thought to look at him that Santa Claus's reindeer had broken a leg and he'd had to walk the last 100 miles all through the night.

The manager noticed it too. "We must smile and be jolly, mustn't we?" he said.

"Must we?" Charlie said glumly.

"Gay! Gay!" said the manager. "Season of festive merriment—let us be gay."

"Bit early aint it?" said Charlie.

"Ha! Ha!" carolled the manager and whipped off spreading joy through the department like a sprig of mistletoe in a home for aged bachelors.

Well, Charlie nearly put his foot in it with his first customer. A very fat little boy kicked him on the ankle to attract his attention, held out a sixpence, pointed to a ten bob set of railway lines and said: "I want one of those."

"Oh! you do," said Charlie, rubbing his leg.

"Yes, I do," said the little boy.

"Well, you can't have one, see," said Charlie. "They cost ten bob, not a tanner—who do you think I am, Santa Claus?"

"Of course you're Santa Claus, young man," said the manager as the boy's mother came forward with a ten bob note.

"Oh! yes," said Charlie. "Of course."

Still he struggled along through the rest of the day, a day full of other people's happy faces and other people's happy children. In fact he might have stuck the job out all right if it hadn't been for a party of kids that came in in the late afternoon—20 of them just being taken around to see the bright colours of Christmas. They were the kids from Mr. Reed's home, and there in the middle of them was Gillian.

Well, that was too much for Charlie. "Walk up! Walk up!" he shouted, and the children came streaming over with their escort fussing behind them like a chick-proud hen. "What would you like from Santa Claus?" said Charlie to the first little girl.

"That dolly," she answered, pointing, and he gave it to her.

"I'm afraid it's a misunderstanding," the nursery woman started to say.

"Don't you believe in Santa Claus missus,?" said Charlie. "Well," she said, looking round at the children. "Of course I do . . . but. . . ."

"Well," said Charlie, "I'm him," and he kept on dishing out the presents until he came to Gillian.

"Well love," he said, "what would you like?"

"I don't want nothing," she said.

"Now, now," he said. "Surely there's something you want for Christmas?"

"I want my mummy and daddy," she said, and she started to cry.

But before Charlie could do anything, the manager came up with blood pressure and a policeman.

"There he is constable! Heavens knows how much stock he has stolen."

"I didn't steal it," said Charlie. "I gave it away."

"Was it yours?" said the manager. "Please remove him constable. I shall follow to prefer charges."

"You'd better come along, chum," said the copper.

Charlie stripped off, and had just got to the beard and moustache when he caught Gillian's eyes watching him.

"D'you mind if I keep the whiskers on mate?" he muttered.

"Eh?" said the copper. He looked at Charlie, then he looked at the kids. "Oh," he said quietly. "I thought they were natural. All the same," he added, looking round for the manager, "we'd better get weaving before Phil the Fluter comes back."

"Thanks," said Charlie.

Well, it was Charlie's first night in gaol and he didn't like it. He still wasn't liking it when they took him out to the sergeant's desk first thing the next morning and there was the manager of the toy department waiting for him. But strangely enough the man was smiling.

"Well, well, Mr. Plaistowe," he said, "all is forgiven and forgotten."

"Eh?" said Charlie, looking blank.

"Let us hear no more of the whole unfortunate affair."

"What?" said Charlie.

"I think he means they're withdrawing charges," said the sergeant.

"Why?" said Charlie.

"Season of goodwill and mellow fruitfulness," the manager said brightly.

"What was the matter with goodwill last night?" said Charlie.

"Ha! ha! you wit!" said the manager.

"Yeh, I know, very funny," said Charlie. "Now come on, what's changed your mind?"

The manager beamed. "We've had considerable fortunate publicity as a result of your behaviour. A film company even rang us for the details and they hope to make a film based on the incident. So, all is forgiven and your position awaits you."

"What do you think I am, an acrobat?" said Charlie. "Once in that position is enough for me."

It was teatime before Charlie felt like facing the empty flat. He was about half-way up the stairs to the flat when he smelt kippers cooking. It got stronger as he got nearer.

He walked into the kitchen. "Hullo!" said Jeannie. "Where were you last night?"

"Never you mind," he said—hoping she wouldn't notice he was glad she didn't know—"where were you the night before?"

"I went back to Mum's of course."

"Well why didn't you take Gillian?"

"Because when I left here I didn't know I was going back o Mum's."

"Oh," said Charlie, and thought he'd better leave it at that.

"She's in the other room if you want to see her," said Jeannie. She put up her face. "And by the way, you haven't kissed me yet."

Charlie didn't move.

"Oh, all right, sulky," she said. "What's the matter now."

Charlie gave her a straight look. "I still haven't got a job," he answered.

"Oh, that," she said airily. "Why not phone the studio? Charlie gave her a Lord-help-me-look. "Phone the studi What would be the use of that? Nobody makes pictu these days, that's why I haven't worked for the past mone or more."

"The trouble with you is you don't read the papers. I look at this." She opened the evening paper and stabbed finger at the centre spread. "Look at that, they're opening the studio to make a film about some crazy be who worked as a Santa Claus in a store then started gives all the presents away instead of selling them. Now do believe me?"

Charlie nodded dumbly.

"Well get along with you then, phone the studio."

When Charlie came back, tea was on the table at the kippers looked as good as they had smelt. But he there with his plate untouched till Jeannie said: "Well, did you get the job?"

He nodded. "Yeah, chief chippy—they'll confirm it, they reckon, at the end of the week."

"There now what did I tell you? Good news at last."

Charlie thoughtfully poked at his kipper with his fork. "I dunno," he said. "This acting lark, it's only translating real life when you come down to it. I reckon I could play this Santa Claus character in the film. 'Course they've picked a big name for it already."

Charlie's family regarded him for a moment with complete mystification. Then first Gillian, and after a moment her mother, burst into peals of laughter. Finally Jeannie said severely: "You forget all that nonsense this minute, Charlie Plaistowe. You're a carpenter and that's a creative professional job like I've always told you. So don't you ever forget it."

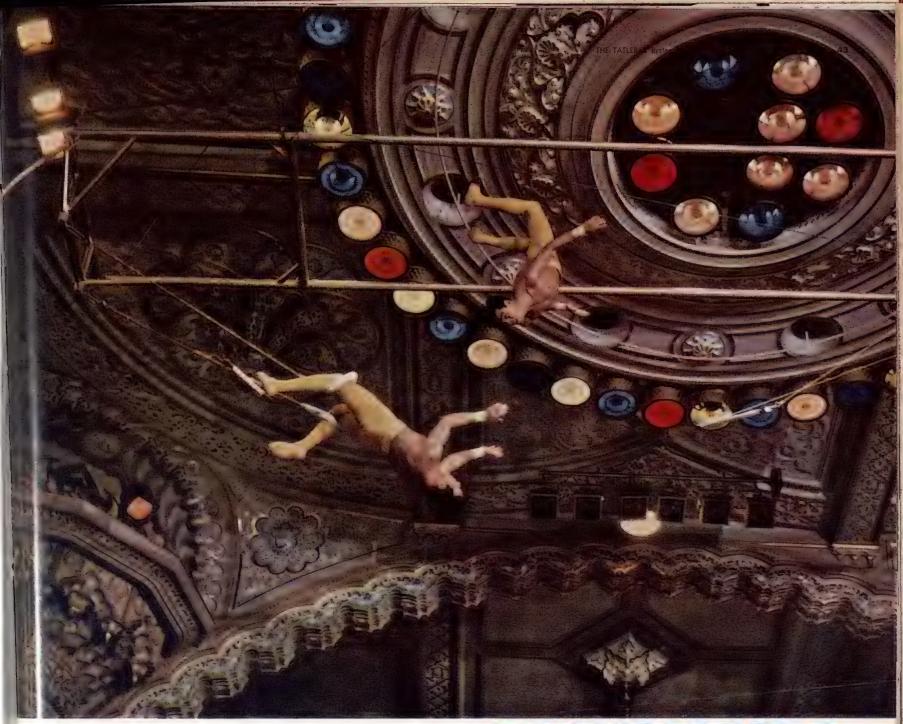
"You're right of course," Charlie said quietly. "It was just that I had a sudden fancy to try on a set of whiskers." His eye suddenly caught the wondering glance of his daughter and he gave her a tremendous wink. Then he leaned forward and kissed Jeannie. Merry Christmas!

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John Slater

Illustrated by Colin Sawyer



SAWDUST &

There are children, there are accompanying adults—and then there are addicts like Siriol Hugh-Jones . . .

SPECTACLE

I have always thought—secretly, since it most likely argues deep fundamental frivolity—that bread and circuses were a perfectly sound combination and a very reasonable taste to acquire early in life. There is no acceptable substitute for either, and the sad thing is that these days both are often better made abroad.

The idea of the circus carries with it an enormous emotional appeal that increases as one grows older and begins to work on the notion that circuses are not what they used to be. For most of us it is a beautiful romantic muddle composed of broken-hearted clowns, on with the motley, fiction specializing in passion, jealousy and sudden death on the high trapeze, the dangerous smell of tigers, Pink Period

TRAPEZE TENSION against the baroque roof of the Tower Circus at Blackpool.

This picture by Barnet Saidman was an Encyclopaedia Britannica Award winner for colour photography. The acrobats are the Palacios from Mexico

CONTINUED ON PAGE 45



There's no finer equestrian spectacle in the sawdust ring than
the extraordinary Schumann's horses, often visitors to Olympia
for Bertram Mills' Christmas circus. Alan Vines went there to
take these photographs of the act training and performing

CONTINUED

Picassos with sparrow-boned balancing girls and brooding musclemen, and the bobbydazzling lion-tamer with a neat military moustache we all fell in love with at the age of six. My own attitude towards circuses is probably shared by three women out of four in that it is strictly coloured by a resigned sort of envy. I never longed to be the lady made of muscle and silver sequins spinning like an airborne dervish while holding on by her astounding molars and incisors to some wisp of wire. I was always going to be simply the finest and most bounceable trampolinist in the business, or possibly the marshmallow-pink spangly girl (where has she gone to now?) with golden curls, postcard smile and an expression of faintly dotty cuphoria, who used to plop peacefully up and down on the stout dappled back of one of those shire-cum-rocking-horses that always looked as though they had been hand-painted with Indian ink.

My ideal circus would have no animal acts. I don't count the Schumann horses, which must really be looked on as human beings of a nobler type. And perhaps I'd make another exception for cotball-playing teams of fox-terriers, since fox-terriers are such good amateur footballers and might just as well turn professional. Bears in bicycles, big cats jumping grumpily through hoops, elephants in unny hats resting their feet lugubriously on the bare stomachs of tard-working dancing-girls give me small joy. All question of cruelty side, their training seems to me a matter of misplaced skill and nergy. Speaking as a lifelong obsessive worrier, I should also like to bolish all high-wire acts performed without a net, since living angerously by proxy seems to me a muddled way of enjoying a jolly laturday matinée.

A single ring is essential (people who prefer three are, I suspect, the kind who gaze with a terrible intensity just past your ear during cocktail-party conversations). There must be at least one group of Cheerful, tiny, infinitely inscrutable Oriental acrobats, and at least the of those magnificent vaguely Magyar families who build themselves into casual pyramids while jumping on and off horses and attering unintelligible savage cries. (Whether the cries are cues, or just encouraging whoops-noises, or "Another muck-up like that and there'll be no baked beans for high tea for anyone," I have never been able to decide.) The top of the pyramid should be an ear-ringed Attila just losing its milk-teeth, and the tribe's lawless grandmother, in fish-net tights and the tunic of a Ruritanian Colonel-in-Chief, should stand about in constantly changing classical poses yelling "Harrumph" to keep things going at full blast.

Clearly there should be as many as possible of those ecstatic performers who hop up unsupported ladders balanced on high wires and then pile an entire tea-set on to a long thin rod, finishing off neatly with the spoon and the lump of sugar. (I know a truly saintly man who says he is planning to watch this sort of thing all day long in heaven, and I know how he feels.) The masters of this game often seem to be beardless boys of around G.C.E. age, which makes the whole enterprise that much more poignant—and fills one with a mad regret for one's own youth spent slogging away at irregular verbs when one might have been lobbing up sugar-lumps with the angels.



CHANGE OF COSTUME for Paulina Schumann, daughter of the Rivels, the Spanish clowns, and former ballet dancer. She wears evening dress for her Liberty horse performance (below). In formal uniform for the haute école display (opposite) she will lie straight backwards as the horse rears vertically



CONTINUE

And most of all, there must be a roaring mob of clowns, slopping pails of whitewash down each other's trousers, tripping over their own seven-league boots, sloshing paintbrushes into painted faces, exploding rude joke-cigars, falling about as stiff as pokers, and running fast in all directions. There ought to be Emmett Kelly mournfully trying to sweep up a spotlight with a little broom, and there must be a White-face Clown as elegant as Percy Huxter who wore his glittering diamond-patchwork, his wide knee-length trousers, his pierrot's conical cap and his beautiful, sharply witty, sugar-icing face as exquisitely as a great dandy, and whose timing had the poetry of pure mathematics. The White-face Clown is the Brummel of the ring, and without him the augustes and carpet clowns and the wild beery ones in bowler hats and astonishing boots lose half their point.

I would guess that the best age for buying the circus with all one's heart—the ring, the rum-ti-tum band (which should not play selections from the latest American musical) and all—is around 12. Four and five is really too early, since at that age there is no reason at all why sensible adults should not be fulfilling their natural function when tiptoeing around on a high wire in a couple of spangles and a wrist-support, so some of the point escapes those bland believing eyes. At 12 or so, few things are more agreeable than to stand just inside the outer ring where the ponies nod and shift in their stalls, and to watch an equestrian act come thudding and skidding out of the bright small circle of light. Very intent and concentrated, they go gasping past in a flurry of sawdust, a curiously troubling and exhilarating mixture of relaxedness and high-strung extreme effort.

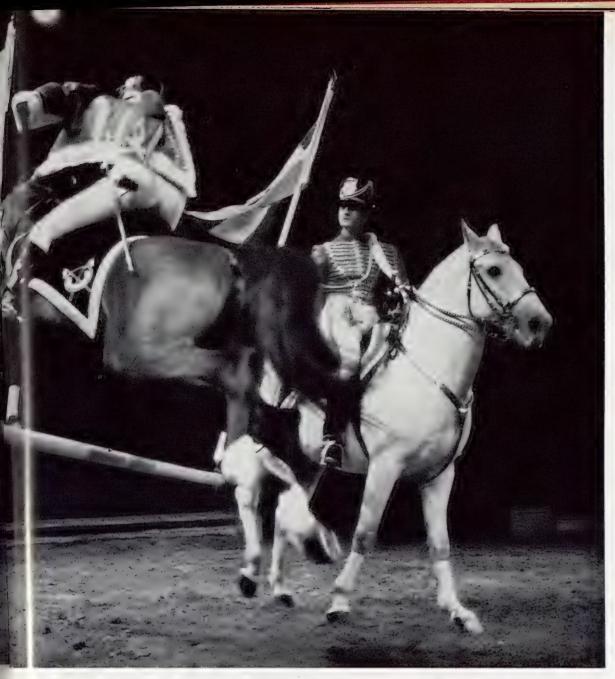
Television, high costs of transport and maintenance, and pressure from other more easily packaged forms of entertainment may be even now spelling the circus's slow death—except in Russia, where Popov flourishes and they know how to make a caged tiger turn into a man in mid-air. Perversely perhaps, and because of my discontent with our recent mammoth circuses, where the clowns are thin on the ground (and often look as though someone has just stunned them with the news of Grimaldi's death), I go searching for small humble foreign circuses of the kind you always just manage to miss. They tether the ponies and begin to set up just as you are off to catch your train. Or you get into town the day after they struck the tent and moved on over the mountain. The footballing foxterriers were better than ever, they tell you, and that pink girl on the rocking-horse turned up again, plump as ever and deeply tranquillized. They'll be back next year, but you'll miss them just the same.

The big circuses have overgrown their strength. When you are skied away in the back of a vast building and the ring is 40 feet wide, it is no longer possible to feel like the guest of some weird and impossible international family, to share some of the strain on the catcher's wrists, to feel the breeze and judder as the horses wheel in, to shake the clown's hand and duck as the ringmaster's whip scatters sawdust into your eye. The circus has been with us for a very long time. It'll be sad for the 12-year-olds if the moment really comes when the only trampolines are to be found in gyms, and all the clowns go into steady jobs in the City.





TRAINING INCIDENT for an Arab. Many horses learn to follow the trainer on their hindlegs, but this one marches upright in front of him. Fourth generation of an equestrian family, Albert Schumann, who has been training horses since he was 17, says any horse can be trained with perseverance



DRAMATIC ENTRANCE by Albert Schumann, Paulina's husband, over a bar carried by his brother and Douglas Kossmayer. Below: Triumphant salute as the horse executes a perfect piasse (French slang for showing off)



"SPANISH TROT" on a drum wired with a microphone to pick up the sound of each hoofbeat is the climax of Albert Schumann's haute école act





by David Morton: illustrated by Jennie Rope

THERE'S no knowing how much longer it may last. Moralists are already mobilized. The Home Secretary talks of reform. But right now there's no need for any American to go on to Paris to see the nude shows—he can find the lot in Soho, and without any language problem. It all began when a Persian gentleman named Mr. Chaudhuri observed what seems to have escaped the Windmill's notice all these years: that the Lord Chamberlain's ruling on nudes (they mustn't move) doesn't apply if you make your theatre a club. He founded the Irving (it was 1956) and the rage was on.

Today London has about 200 strip clubs. Most of these are floating clip-joints, opening for only a few weeks. But about 20 permanent clubs operate serencly around the West End, tolerated by the police, who regard them as a useful safety-valve (since the Wolfenden Report drove London's strolling voyeurs to their doctors with a crick in the neck from gazing up at Soho windows).

Outside, the clubs are blazoned in neon with a sort of private language—"Sexiest," "Sauciest," "Exotic," "Voluptuous." Inside, the managers refer to their activities as "Artistic," "Intimate" and "Tasteful." The girls are "Innocent" or "Simple." One soon interprets this language—"salacious," "deprayed," "over-developed bosom" &c—but after visiting six clubs, my private thesaurus falls open at boredom and infestivity.

Except perhaps for The Keyhole. It doesn't have a fountain, a filmshow and a public relations officer like the Raymond Revuebar. It doesn't have a Belgravia telephone number like the Paradise. It hasn't got a lift and a view like the Nell Gwynne. But it's got class. . . . For a start, as Sam Bloom says (and he runs it), it's in the heart of clubland. Mr. Bloom is not talking about the Hostess Room or Sam's Spieler; he refers to the proximity of the East India and Sports, the Athenaeum, Pratt's and Whites. And many a secretary of such establishments would be happy to have as many members. If the same secretary visited The Keyhole it would be apparent to him why his chess room and library were so empty.

A girl joined us (on stage) in her négligée, sitting on the side of a rumpled double bed. I suppose it was a négligée: anyway, it certainly wasn't a dressing-gown. Madam was getting ready for bed. As soon as she touched the sheets—it must have been a warm night, for she didn't trouble to put on a nightdress—she started to show signs of what can euphemistically be called "feeling uncomfortable." She rolled her eyes, tossed and turned and palpated her breasts. Everything in fact, suggested that she couldn't remember turning the gas off. The sheet got terribly twisted and she mimed someone climbing a rope without stirring from the horizontal. The record finished, the curtain closed almost quickly enough to hide her as she

finally made up her mind and leapt from the bed to check the gas.

The last time I saw a group of people like the audience was on Speech Day at school, but then they were on stage and didn't have gin and tonics tinkling at their elbows. As on Speech Day, they appeared slightly nervous, perspiring lightly and biting their fingernails furtively. Some were balding and had all the symptoms of management disease; others peered out of raincoats and spectacles and looked at their watches to keep track of the last train home. One group, bent on whooping it up, kept peering behind the curtains until another group who couldn't see complained of the unfairness of it all to the comedian. They have a comic, you see, to try and prevent riots and civil disorder while the backdrop is changed. I wouldn't have that job for anything. The Society for Distributing the Holy Scriptures to the Jews must have a cakewalk in comparison. The audience had not come for jokes.

Mr. Sam Bloom, the purveyor of what they have come for, is an ex-wrestler who owns a textile mill. He says this is a help, as he gets the material for the costumes from his own warehouse (I can't see, now, that this could ever be a striking economy). Members are confidentially indexed. When I was there I saw a prominent merchant banker and an off-duty police inspector, and in a few days a party of nuclear physicists was expected. The general impression given was that Mr. Bloom would not be at a loss for someone to talk to if the nearby clubs (of the other kind) offered him reciprocal membership.

Like all the club proprietors, Mr. Bloom relies on bar receipts for a large slice of the takings, and you enter through a bar decorated like a saloon in an adult western. Mr. Bloom hinted of wild extravagance and sending a decorator to America for ideas. The atmosphere between shows was rather like a theatre bar, except that drinks were easier to come by and there was less critical comment on the performers, some of whom were present (fully dressed) sipping lager and limes. But it isn't the drinks that bring them in, as the visit to the basement showed. There the next act was Rowool and Bridgeet from Paree in "Jungle Temptress.

A stage hand removed a panel from the platform running down the aisle, to reveal a small static water tank; the curtains opened to show us a fair-to-middling imitation of Mlle. Bardot, dressed in a cotton shift, and Rowool, in tattered canvas trousers. It is a simple story that is unfolded for our delight. Bridgeet wishes to attract Rowool's attention, but he seems preoccupied. Bridgeet crouches in eight inches of water and splashes about as if it were a paddy-field. The shift clings to her like a drip-dry shirt to a towel rail and soon Rowool is driven to notice her.

The shameless little hussy drives away his noble thoughts (how to find his way out of the jungle?) and his mind is turned to other things, the nature of which soon becomes apparent. The curtain falls and one realizes that the audience has been holding its breath.

It is precisely this tension that ensures the future prosperity of the strip industry. Admittedly there is a strong movement for legislation, which seems to think, with Mr. Butler, that you could get at the root of the mushroom by licensing the drink sales. Really Mr. Butler! As I said earlier, it isn't the drinks that bring them in. Indeed, even Magnus Hirschfeld might be surprised to find how flagellation, boot-fetishism, sado-masochism, narcissism, transvestism, and almost every other perverse-ism except cannibalism is portrayed before half a million men. These appetites are strong enough to ensure, in my opinion, that the audiences would patronize the clubs with or without drinks. And even without the bar receipts the clubs would show a rattling good profit as they usually charge about 25/- for membership and the same amount every time you see a show.

Anyway, what makes anyone so sure the law *could* be changed? The clubs have friends. From their membership they could organize a lobby that would not only be powerful but respectable. The stockbrokers could handle the save-the-strippers fund, the advertising executives could plan the campaign, and the M.P.s could make the speeches.





EDINBURGH CAST

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For the first time for more than a generation the question "Have you brought your music?" means something again. It doesn't mean quite what it did in Victorian and Edwardian times; the ballads our forefathers (and particularly our foremothers) took with them to sing while visiting were not what the modern young understand by the term. In our time a "ballad" is a very, very slow tune sung very, very loud, by a very, very tearful entertainer (note how we avoid the word "singer") on a record that sells by the million. It does not—mercifully

—come any longer into the category of home music-making. Nevertheless, the modern English home is in its way more filled with the sounds of music than perhaps at any time since the Elizabethans sang their after-dinner madrigals.

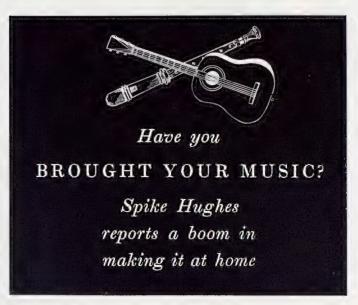
Much of our neo-Elizabethan domestic music is mechanized, of course, though this in itself isn't so new either. (Henry VIII's collection of instruments included a mechanized virginal.) But what is even more surprising than the unparalleled choice of music in the home provided by mechanical means is the unexpected popularity of manually-operated musical instruments. Sales of guitars, mouth-organs and recorders (the ones you blow down, not only the

tape sort) have increased spectacularly in less than a decade, and the six-string guitar is as familiar a hire-purchase commitment on the housing estate as a washing-machine or a scooter.

The guitar, which Paganini regarded as the most difficult of all stringed instruments to play, has been popular among English amateurs, off and on, for centuries. Its last peak of popularity was in early Victorian times when young ladies of good family played it to accompany their young gentlemen, whose fashionable instrument was the flute. The national urge to strum subsided until the middle 1920s, when it was revived by the introduction to Europe of the ukelele. This simple instrument from Hawaii, intended originally to accompany native singers of what is without doubt the most uninteresting 'olk music in the world, appealed to the English is an instrument in its own solo right. It was liscovered to be capable of a couple of endlessly epeated chords guaranteed to drown Tea for Two played on any clockwork portable gramophone of the time. It was particularly popular in his capacity on the Backs at Cambridge; until with a lack of logic unbecoming to this particular Alma Mater, the proctors banned gramophones, not the ukelele, from the Backs. The only Englishman who ever actually sang to the ukelele was George Formby, Jr. He still is.

Today the guitar, an instrument of such antiquity that the Greeks were far from being the first to have a word for it, has been restored to favour. It is once again the most up-to-date means of youthful musical self-expression. The Space Age, it seems, will have none of your electronic instruments. Accompanying itself on the guitar, it sings folk songs, calypsos, and

dresses up like a cowboy to do it. Which just goes to show that the ideal of the Simple Life has lost none of its ageless appeal to youth. As for the guitar—it is the perfect instrument to evoke romantic thoughts of the wandering minstrelsy, gipsy camp-fires and Mediterranean slumming fashionable among the *jeunesse dorée* of all nations. Those in less privileged income brackets are perhaps not quite so up to date; folk songs and calypsos are a little too sophisticated for the likes of a teenage guitarist who



told me that he had mastered the chords of a brand new tune—"a real smasher"—called *Ramona*. (Copyright 1928, would that be?)

The most important thing, though, is that a whole generation has taken to the guitar. True, few of them can play any more than the top four strings of the instrument (which are tuned and fingered in the same way as a ukelele), but at least it looks like a proper instrument instead of a toy. The mouth-organ, on the other hand, which was never intended by its inventors to be much more than a toy, is being developed into a "serious" instrument. Thanks to the example of Larry Adler, who has inspired the composition of large-scale pieces for the instrument by Vaughan Williams, Darius Milhaud, Malcolm Arnold and other squares, the mouth-organ is now an instrument that may be played in a stationary position instead of on the march with a conscript, all-male military chorus bellowing Roll Out the Barrel behind you.

The recorder, too, from being an archaic and homespun affair, has been found capable of a far wider range of music than that favoured by Samuel Pepys when he played what is also known as the "fipple flute." It has the heartening advantage of being one of the few instruments that anybody can get a note out of at first blow. It is therefore manufactured by the thousand for schoolchildren, who rapidly attain a fair competence and often continue playing their recorders long after school-leaving age.

The guitar, the mouth-organ and the recorder, however, are merely different means to the ancient and familiar end of amateur music-making. In the end there are always more consumers than producers of music, and the real

revolution of our time has been the development of the long-playing record and its effect on domestic musical life. In the early days of the gramophone people bought records of Marie Lloyd and Albert Chevalier, to be reminded at home of what they had heard in the music hall. Today it is the other way round. People buy a record and then go to the music hall to be reminded of what they have heard at home. In all fairness it must be said that after one first-hand experience of the latest rock 'n' roll wonder

child in the flesh the record-buying public usually returns home to its records. Which is why the record industry is thriving and music hall is not.

It must not be thought that the idea of the gramophone record as a musicalexperience-in-itself is confined solely to the world of rock-and-pops. The classical LP catalogues are filled with music that is virtually never heard except in recorded form. Thanks to the subsidy provided by the millions-a-month sales of pop records among teenagers, the gramophone companies have been able to spread themselves and record complete operas on LPs, and a mass of rare and esoteric music by major and minor composers. Today the well-supplied armchair listener can draw on an operatic repertoire, for instance, that cannot be

equalled by any opera house in the world. One other great educational service performed by the record companies from time to time is, of course, that of demonstrating by the issue of some pretty obscure music that certain composers have not, after all, been undeservedly neglected. This is only proper; there is no reason why the Third Programme should enjoy a monopoly of this work.

But perhaps the most astonishing, because it is the least obvious and publicised form of domestic music these days, is the continued popularity of the player-piano. New rolls are constantly being issued. Sometimes they offer the accompaniment to a Schubert song for the amateur singer who has no pianist friend; sometimes they are transcriptions that may well provide a young pedaller with his first experience of an orchestral work. I remember as a boy hearing Stravinsky's Sacré du Printemps for the first time on a player-piano. It was an odd experience. The instrument belonged to Mr. Clifford Bax, who once broadcast on the secrets of good player-piano playing.

The great joy of the player-piano, however, is the almost unlimited control one has over the music. If you disagree with the tempo and expression marks for Chopin's Black Key Study indicated on the roll, you can play it your way—at a spectacularly breakneck speed. Also, it is a wonderful aid to cultural boasting. By careful placing of the instrument so that it is visible through the window to passers-by you can make an impression of prodigious virtuosity. Keeping up with the Joneses? You slay them—that is, until they invite you round and ask you to bring your music.





Kept till last, an examination of a proposition that promoters hate to have talked about. The inquiring photographer is Lewis Morley, the ruminative writer is RONALD BLYTHE. Together they take a new look at the old heresy that

The best things in life are FREE!

J-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S spells buy and once again the shamefully chiming tills are drowning the bells of Bethlehem. Bank managers everywhere are brushing up their lecturettes in readiness for the victims of the hard sell. Oxford Street is one huge grabbing hand and Fifth Avenue is a maw. None is exempt. Maharajahs, who have picked up infidel notions at Cambridge, are ticking off their presents. Winter-cruise tickets for the poor Wiltshires, who have had to spend the entire summer showing their Knellers to coach parties. Blanket rubies for that clever child at the Cannes Film Festival and How To Do It by Elsa Maxwell for Noel. My Bournemouth aunt will be driving to Woolworth's to choose her "little surprises."

And every year it gets earlier and earlier. The advertising gentlemen, those hucksters in Locke hats, have been wrapping it up in fine words and fancy paper ever since July. It is now possible to buy your Christmas cards whilst on your summer holiday. I actually saw two dear young people doing it, the salt water trickling down their bikinis on to the snow scenes as they sorted through the sixpenny box. In October the Americans at our neighbouring aerodrome began to erect a Crib on the roof of their biggest H-bomber hangar. Soon the vast consumer orgy will reach its climax. Gallons of unsuitable scent will flow in the direction of overworked mothers, mink will be cast before mistresses and sensible electric mixers presented to wives. Millions of dreadful ties will be received with hypocritical joy. In Beccles my uncle will be framing his last sickly water-colour in

passe-partout. And every year I say to myself, I won't!

I am a rational person, I tell myself. I am civilized. It is my duty to myself and to society to take a stand against the fearful materialism of the age. I will draw my own Christmas cards on the backs of old sugar bags and I won't add to the tragic dilemma of my friend Mrs. Q., who, as they say, "has everything," by sending her vodka coasters-for no one would wish for two lots of these. As for the children of my acquaintance, I'll give them something costing half-acrown, for, as everyone knows, "children love an old cotton-reel better than the most elaborate toy." (Has anyone ever dared to give a child an old cotton-reel for Christmas?) And from now on I will keep my eyes glued to the central type of all magazines and newspapers. In this way I shall avoid those beguiling borders of ads. The acquisitive instinct shall be quashed. Let others give epergnes, Cashmere stoles, Kaendler jugs, baguettes of pink diamonds, jig-saw puzzles, tickets for Aldeburgh and Glyndebourne, Scotch. sandalwood peppermills, hi-fis, Him-and-Her bath towels and bus fares to Moscow, I shall give the compliments of the season -and wish for nothing more substantial in return.

For, what is this life, so full of care, if we are all to pay through the nose for every minute of it? I am an intelligent person—did I not pay 3s. 6d. to see the Picasso Exhibition, 15s. 6d. to see Arnold Wesker and a guinea to hear the Third?—so why should I be driven into debt annually by some smart subliminal youth on the Christmas money-go-round CONTINUED ON PAGE 56

Fireworks are free if you only watch other people's shows. To see a spectacle like this one, put on for President de Gaulle in St. James's Park during his State Visit this spring, it's best to live in London—or there are fares to find. Cowes, too, is a good vantage point; the pyrotechnics that round off Cowes Week are on the same exciting scale. Then there's always a good show somewhere on Guy Fawkes's Night, which seems to be having a post-war revival, with complicated set-pieces that make roman candles look like squibs





free and they're switched on in Trafalgar Square when the Christmas tree from Norway -an annual institution—is there. With the fairy lights twinkling and the fountains blending the colours it's a sight with warmth enough to keep the pigeons from their roosts Not that they could hear themselves twitter when the carol-singing is on

The best things in life are FREE! CONTINUED

for the sake of some over-packaged b th salts and the like? I shall set the patt rn for simple pleasures. It shall be New Year's resolution.

Way back in our musical history, I ng ago when symphony concerts were irranged round the immovable majesty of the Nine O'Clock News like coq au in round a heap of cold rice, and dises vere called records, and Cliff Richard war in a pram, and Vera Lynn was still mak ng everyone homesick for Tobruk, there was a plangent ditty which took the town called The Best Things In Life Are F.ec. I forget the words of this song—if ever I knew them-but the gist of its argument was that paying cash for one's happiness was a big nonsense and that the earth was the Lord's and the fullness thereof. It was not a convincing song, being mostly concerned with things one couldn't eat, such as stars and grass and sunbeams, but its heart was in the right place, and now that the Christmas buying spree is about to reach its artful zenith I thought I would try and list all the things I enjoy which have nothing to do with my chequebook. I will have to be careful, for one false step will lead me straight into Ella-Wheeler-Wilcox-land.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 59





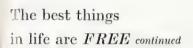


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free and sometimes there's a visual bonus like the special display Selfridge's arranged for Princess Margaret's wedding. The contemplation of things you aren't about to buy is surely the most righteous of pleasures—and ever noticed how much more tempting the things look if you happen to be on holiday?

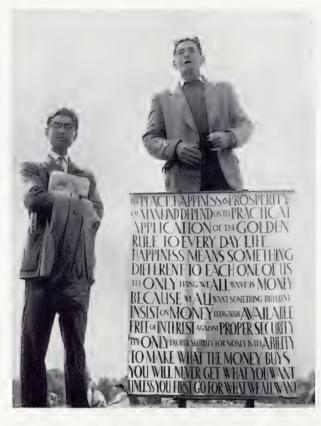


I like reading almost more than anything else in life. I belong to that insatiable word-grubbing set which would sooner read Bradshaw than nothing, and i is not at all difficult for me to imagine myself in circumstances where the E-K volume of the London Telephone Directory would be bliss and the S-Z section vary heaven. I am so claimed by this vice that it matters little to me whether the only book in a house is an old seed contained or the latest Lawrence Durrell; I can read either with enchantment. And mading—if one goes the right way about it—can be free. Or as good as.

I like walking about towns late at n ght when the reflective façades of the buildings assume a passionless immutability masking a million sleepers and lovers. I like the theatrical panache of

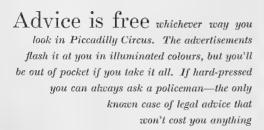
CONTINUED OVERLEAF





Speech is free—especially at Marble Arch. You can hear the craziest notions and watch the oddest people. Heckling is welcomed and entertainment guaranteed—but there's always that chance of going in as a Benthamite Liberal and coming out as a Zen Buddhist. Oh, and watch your pockets





Sailing is free on the little lakes of England's parks, like the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens. In this picture are two ages of sail and two ages of sailor—the balding clipper-owner and the watching children. Can you spot the tiny helmsman in the clipper's stern?



doorways and the beautiful bits of Georgian and Victorian houses above the crude plate-glass shops. Midnight architecture is highly satisfying, though there can be a small charge if one cannot convince a bored policeman of one's aesthetic intent.

I like crunching over an enormous shingle beach near my home in Suffolk. It is a featureless—even a fearful—land-scape to some people. Just miles and miles of rattling stones being clattered by the wind on one side and by the North Sea on the other. The sea itself is rarely warm enough to swim in and hardly ever blue, and the stones are too bumpy to sit on, so one just walks and walks in the whipping air, hypnotized and somehow made deeply, inexplicably happy by the millions of delicately coloured flint spheres

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62

The best things in life are FREE continued



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and oblates clinking against each other in their endless propinquity. Like a small boy in a pebble field, I plunge on and on for foot-slithering, calf-splitting miles in the simple trust that one day some perfect pebble will reveal itself and somehow change the history of the world.

What else? I like talking and listening, watching faces, day-dreaming, being alone, looking for plants, poking about in old churches and reading tombstones, sunbathing, letters, the smell in art galleries—that rich pourri of old masters, Mansion polish and good central heating -gardening and, now I come to list them, quite a thousand pleasant things which, if not free in the absolute meaning of the word, also cannot be said to involve me in the absolute meaning of "expense." "Simple pleasures, simple pleasures!" as an ancient friend used to remark as he stirred his souchong with a Jacobean spoon and moved his chair so that the late afternoon sun didn't reflect in the Sickerts.

I fancy that the key to free living is to be found in a well-developed sensuality. One might describe it as the mescalin approach to life in which the effect of happiness is achieved without resort to stimulants. After all, it is stimulants alone which make one's three score years and ten such a dreadfully expensive business. When weekends in Deauville become a must, well then there is no hope for one, for joy will last exactly as long as one's credit.

But no more. I feel God-wottery overtaking me. Friends who will remember me in more gilded situations than picking up stones at Shingle Street will be raising their brows, or even their ire. Perhaps these priceless felicities should remain anonymous. After all, to count one's blessings and to leave out an ability to tell the difference between Moët and Dry Imperial is hardly honest.

Parks are free,

perhaps with peacocks thrown in (as in London's Holland Park), Actually this is in York, where the peacocks are in among the Roman ruins, which cost 6d. to see. But so far nobody's thought of charging for parks, which are colourful enough even without this show-off's plumage

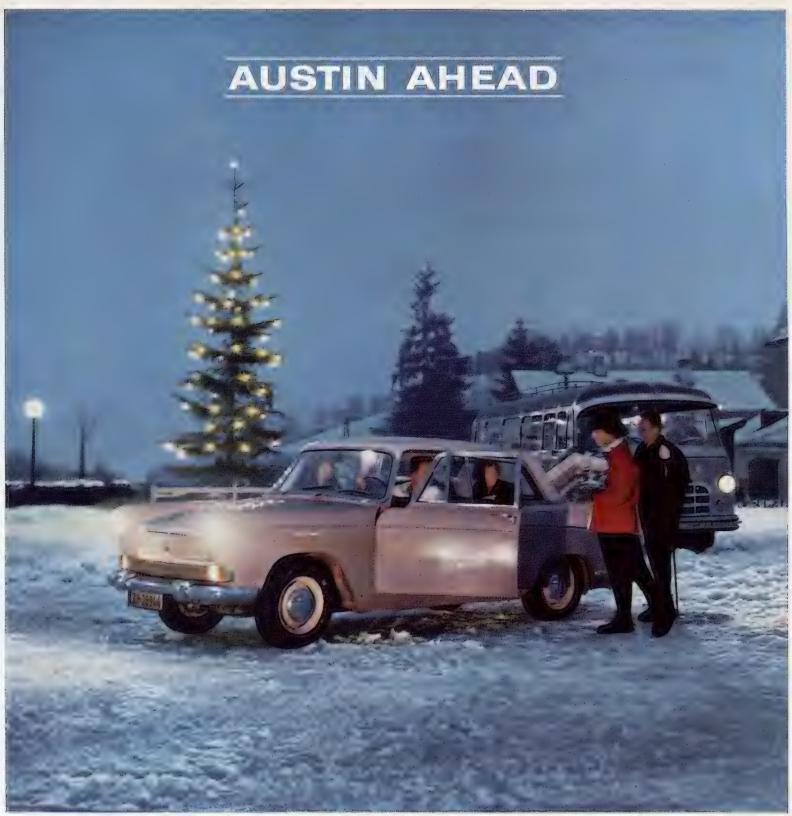
The best things in life are FREE concluded

Building is fi ee-

to watch, that is. Some sees even have a prestige "public observation platform," and in Beak Street the contractor have provided the refinement of a TV-shaped peephole to w toh the men at work. This ye mg onlooker would rather do without it, though



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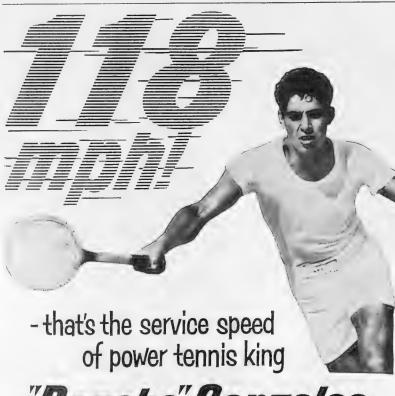
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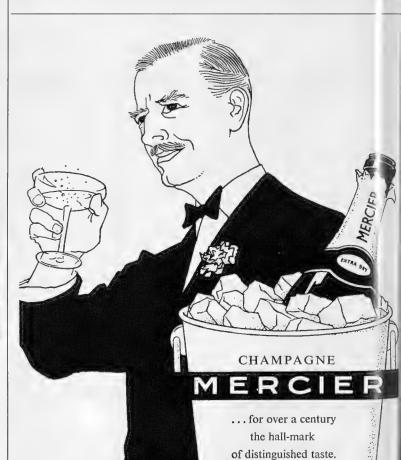
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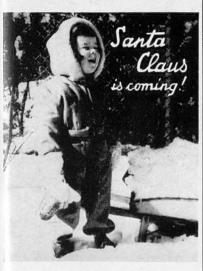
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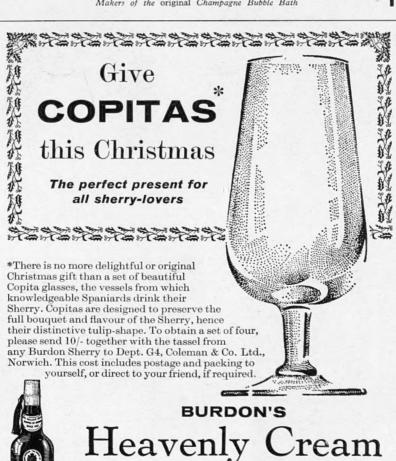




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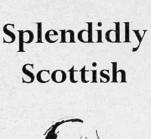


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